Forest Establishments In Kumaun Himalaya Region During The Colonial Regime: With Special Reference To Forest Rest Houses

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Abstract: This study inquiries into the forest infrastructure that was established during the period of the British colonial regime in the Kumaon region of Uttarakhand. The Uttarakhand region has been characterized by abundance of forests from ancient times, owing to its unique geographical location. Consequently, after the annexation of Uttarakhand in 1815, the British administration directed its attention towards the copious forest resources. However, the development of mechanisms and machinery is also necessary to effectively exploit the available resources. This study examines the factors that prompted the British government to take notice of the extensive forest resources in the Kumaon region of Uttarakhand, as well as the measures they implemented to establish a robust infrastructure in the form of Forest Rest Houses, cart and bridal roads, railway tracks, dak bungalows and guest houses etc. facilitating the efficient exploitation of these forests.

Introduction

Trees and plants have been a part of the earth since their origins some 400 million years ago. They play an important role in making the planet our home. The earth began as a pile of mud, and even a tiny bit of rain affected the contour of the surface. However, with the emergence of plants on the surface, not only did the soil get support, but the amount of Carbon dioxide in the earth's atmosphere decreased while the amount of oxygen grew up. The continual development of trees resulted in the formation of forests, and the Earth's environment grew more conducive to life. There is a prevailing belief that *Homo erectus*, a species of early humans, engaged in the utilization of wood as a means to create fire, with this practice dating back to a minimum of 750,000 years ago. The archaeological findings at the Kalambo Falls (a prehistoric settlement, situated approximately 30 kilometers North-West of Mbala district in the Northern province which

was excavated by Professor John Desmond Clark between 1956 and 1959, revealing a stratified stone age sequence from the early stone age to the iron age), a site in Tanzania provide the earliest known evidence of wood utilization in construction, dating back around 60,000 years. The initial settlements in India, Pakistan, Egypt, and Mesopotamia were established in proximity to canals that traversed the arid regions. These people relied on the presence of dispersed trees along the riverbanks, utilizing them for various purposes such as fuel, construction materials, and tool handles, similar to their contemporary usage (Chaney et. al., 2023). Humans began to create infrastructure for the utilization of forests as cultures and civilizations evolved. For the use of forests, new tools were developed and new routes were created for the transportation of resources. For this, cutting and cleaning machinery for wood was invented, which made human life more sophisticated. The evolution of the notion of state made the

monarch, the lord of all land and resources. Thus, infrastructure was built to ensure a steady supply of forest resources for the state's growth.

The ancient term 'Vana' denoted forest, often described as a realm inhabited by Rakasa (demons), emphasizing its mysterious nature (Thapar, 2014). The state viewed safeguarding against this as its responsibility, establishing forestry departments and outposts for monitoring and revenue collection. Forest management and resource utilization remained consistent across eras. The British victory in 1757 marked a significant shift, extending colonial authority over a large part of India. Colonial rule introduced Western administrative structures and exploitation of resources, lasting nearly two centuries. Over time, as autonomy in India grew, infrastructure development became a focus alongside resource consumption. This paper explores British forestry practices in the Kumaon Himalaya of Uttarakhand, tracing the evolution from exploitation to moderate development. It examines the establishment of forest rest houses, contributing to overall forest infrastructure. Through historical investigation, it sheds light on the transformation of colonial forestry policy.

Theoretical Development

Following the conclusion of both world wars, three significant ideological movements came into existence after the 1950s. These three movements- **Pacifism**, **Feminism**, and **Environmentalism** emerged as a response to the disastrous events that were caused by the indiscriminate display of power by global powers. However, the idea of pacifism or global peace soon collapsed as the world immediately got embroiled in the Cold War and a fierce struggle for sovereignty between capitalism and communism began. But feminism and environmentalism got enough space both on the world stage and in the academic space. In 1950, the word "environment" referred to the confined

conditions that existed at home or in the place of employment. In the years that followed, the idea progressed to encompass the intricate interactions that occur between the acts of humans and any and all aspects of their natural surroundings. While the sentiment of environmentalism can be traced back to ancient times, the contemporary understanding and formulation of this notion is mostly attributed to the contributions of American Marine Biologists, Rachel Carson, particularly through her influential writings **"Silent Spring"** and **"The Edge of the Sea"** (MacDonald, 2003). The publication of Silent Spring elicited a profound reaction among readers of the middle-class demographic due to its revelatory nature, as it shed light on the detrimental effects of DDT and other chemical pollutants on both animal species and human well-being. The field of historiography saw substantial transformations during the 1950s. Following the conclusion of the war, there was a discernible reduction in the significance attributed to political history, as the discipline of history expanded to encompass a broader scope that extended beyond the mere documentation of political and economic events. New trends like gender studies, organized Marxist writings, class struggle, third-generation annals historiography, Environmental History and modern American historiography etc. emerged (Farber 1999; Obelkevich 2000).

The early environmentalists of India started working by holding the British government responsible for all the environmental changes in the Indian subcontinent. The early naturalists of India referred to the time before British rule as the "golden age of the environment." They endeavored to demonstrate that the concept of legitimate and sustainable use of forests was already prevalent in India prior to the entrance of the British. They also attempted to demonstrate that the model of forest usage had fundamentally shifted when the British arrived

(Gadgil and Guha 1992; Rangarajan 2007). **This Fissured Land (1992)** laid the theoretical foundation for the study of forest use in colonial India.

The majority of research pertaining to forests that are conducted in the region of Uttarakhand or Kumaon region on the forest policies that were implemented by the British. The majority of historians have documented the administrative, economic, and social transformations pertaining to the forests in Uttarakhand (Pande 1937; Pant 1922; Tolia 2009). These studies are mainly related to the political history of Uttarakhand.

Later on, a new historiographical trend evolved which resisted the very idea of colonial destruction in India. These academics attempted to demonstrate that forest exploitation was not exclusive to the British and that environmental degradation was not a recent occurrence in India. The authors Guha and Gadgil's notion of a golden age is challenged in an attempt to demonstrate that it is really a fantasy. Furthermore, it is argued that the British not only exploited India but also disseminated modern ideas of forest conservation throughout the country (Groove 1995; Tucker, 2012). These Studies, however, clearly miss an important aspect of forest history, the study of forest infrastructure. They are more concerned with the politics of forest management and the blame game for the environmental degradation, but there was much more left to look into.

Early Establishments

Before the arrival of the British, the Uttarakhand region was divided into two parts –Kumaon and Garhwal, which were frequently at war with each other. Due to these internal conflicts in Kumaon and Garhwal, the attention of the Gorkha rulers of Nepal was attracted towards Uttarakhand. As a result, the Gurkha army under the leadership of Amar Singh Thapa captured Kumaon (Saksena, 1956). The rule of the Gorkhas in Kumaon lasted for 25 years and they soon had to fall prey to the ambitious policies of the British. The British defeated the Gurkha forces and on 2 December 1815, a treaty was signed between Gorkha representative Gajraj Mishra and Lieutenant Colonel Bradshaw Yorke Reilly, which brought the entire area of Uttarakhand under the control of the British (Rawat 2019). The treaty was later acknowledged by the Nepalese king on 2nd March 1816.

The British attempted to remedy the instability that had spread in Kumaon in the early years of the administration. Keeping in view the geographical location of the area, the British Government declared it a Non-Regulating Territory. First of all, they tried to take control of all the forest land in the area. They propagated that the ruler had the sole authority over the forests of its empire. A working plan reads, *"From the time immemorial the forests along the foot of the hills to which alone any fiscal value pertained, were considered the property of the ruling power…* (Working Plan, Kumaun Forest Division, 1894**). Prominent historian Badri Datt Pande mentioned the same about the early British policies (Pande 1937). Although there is evidence that kings used to award woods and meadows in the form of land grants, this does not however indicate that common people were not permitted to enjoy the forests. When we examine the historical period of India, we find that a significant portion of it is connected to the herdsmen who used to make their living by consuming the forests that were located within the state. In addition to this, the evidence of shifting cultivation provides further confirmation that the general population have enough rights over the woodlands (Singh 2009). The initial trend of the British went towards the revenue system here and the early commissioners made many settlements for revenue. Edward Gardner, the first commissioner of Kumaun made the first settlement, *Eksaalaa* and fixed the total revenue at ₹85,328 (Kayasth 1897). There was no clear demarcation between village and

forest boundaries till that period. Commissioner George William Trail applied a new settlement popularly known as *Assi Sala Bandobast* in 1823 to separate forest land from the village territory.

Change in Policies

At first, the British attempted to improve the revenue system by establishing several different settlements. Seven settlements were made during the time of George Trail alone. Because the British were so concerned with cash, and because their primary source of revenue was agriculture, they were first unaware of the full potential of Uttarakhand's forest resources. As a result, the initial reforms of the British were agriculture-oriented rather than forest-oriented. In addition, parts of Kumaon such as Almora, Nainital, Ranikhet, Kausani, Pithoragarh, etc. were developed as hill resorts for British officers, similar to other hilly locations. But very quickly things began to take a new turn. The British wanted to construct warships that were robust and long-lasting to keep their fleet at its finest, and to do so, they required a significant quantity of timber. But by the time of the nineteenth century, Britain's woodlands were gone, having been decimated first by the Industrial Revolution and then by continental conflicts (Gadgil and Guha, 1992). As a result, he began to focus her attention on the forest resources of her colonies. In the year 1823, Commissioner Trail instituted a prohibition on the cutting of Sal trees from Thaplas (terraced land) to maximise the amount of money that could be gained by selling them to the contractors. The contract arrangement for felling continued in Kumaun till 1858. The timber was exported to the adjoining plains from the Kumaun region.

While on the one hand, the policies of the company were being criticized for their destructive attitude towards the environment, on the other hand, there were talks about the absence of any significant development in the Kumaon region. A report published in Calcutta Review reads- *"For nearly forty years the British government has been established in Kumaun and Garhwal. Can we give a good account of our stewardship? We fear that this question cannot be answered very decidedly in the affirmative, vastly superior as our Government has been to any that preceded it… in a country like Kumaon, covered with vast mountains… Roads and bridges are equally important to every class of the community, to the agriculturist as much as to the merchant… after so many years, there hardly exists a road in these provinces fit for the passage of laden cattle."* (The Himalaya in Kumaun and Garhwal , 1858)**.** Because of the Charter Act of 1833, the Company's privileges were severely limited, and as a result, the company was compelled to shift its focus to other areas. The East India Company recognized the importance of investing in the expansion of its infrastructure in order to ensure its continued survival. At the same time, there was intense pressure on the Indian government from London to develop railways in India. In a well-known memorandum dated 1853, Lord Dalhousie, the governor-general of India, articulated the dual role of railway building as a catalyst for establishing a market for British goods and as a channel for British capital seeking lucrative investment opportunities (Guha, 2001). India's railways were constructed by the British in an effort to integrate the two nations' economies. However, the establishment of the railway system encompassed more than mere economic advantages. The British sought to assert their dominion over the Indian population through this endeavour. During that period, British poets portrayed this as an indication of the magnificence of the British Empire in relation to the East. In his poem **Passage to India (1971)**, Walt Whitman referred to it as one of the three contemporary marvels of the earth (Iqbal, 2006). They sought to secure British political and military dominance across the Indian subcontinent at the same time (Thorner 1955; Sarkar 1989).

Timber for sleepers began to be brought from the Kumaon region as the railways extended towards North India. However, the process of extracting wood from the forests of Kumaon and converting it into sleepers was a challenging task. Given the challenging geographical conditions of Uttarakhand, the primary objective was to identify the optimum and densest forest area, strategically cordon it off and thereafter establish a monopoly over its resources. In addition, in response to the disruption in Pegu and the increased demand for forest preservation, the Imperial Forest Department was founded in 1864 under the supervision of German Forester Sir Dietrich Brandis. Theoretically, its objective was better management and protection of forests in India. The forests of the present Kumaun Forest Division were denuded of good trees in all easily accessible places and were it not that nature has happily made the Sal, Sein, Shisham, Khair and Dhauri largely reproductive, the forest department would have had very little to concern. Apart from this, many trees were not being used to their full potential by the local population. The government was amazed to know that among a large number of indigenous trees, very few were considered valuable by the natives of the Himalayan region. This was partly due to the lack of preservation methods for felled trees and greatly due to the ignorance of the properties of the various indigenous timber. The Sal trees (*Shorea robusta*) characterized by their rapid growth, offer a durable and dense wood suitable for sleepers and various construction purposes. Additionally, the bark of these trees finds application in the process of tanning. The deodar and chirpiness trees were also found to produce resin, which was highly sought after by manufacturers of maps and cabinets, oil painters, and carriage builders for use as varnish. The antiseptic wood oil derived from the versatile deodar tree was utilized for the preservation of lumber, effectively protecting it from pest infestation

(Beinart and Hughes, 2007). Moreover, the British experienced significant equipment and manpower casualties during the conflict in northern India and the northern Deccan in 1857. The Rebellion of 1857 resulted in the transfer of power from the company to the crown. As a result, this placed additional strain on various government departments to generate increased revenue without inciting further opposition by raising land tax rates or acquiring other territories. The British military observed the military significance of railways during the conflict, which further reinforced their enduring belief in the advancement of science and technology. Additionally, these advancements proved to be financially lucrative. Therefore, the British Raj had the expectation that its railway, forestry, irrigation, and other departments would enhance the productivity of the existing regions under British control through the implementation of "scientific" infrastructural advancements, all while creating budget surpluses (Fisher 2018). Consequentially, the availability of lumber for railways and warships, rising criticism from the home government and the growing importance of forest resources prompted the British to fine-tune their forest policy. Following that, well-planned infrastructures for forest management and exploitation were created.

Forest Establishments in Kumaun

The profound influence of railway construction on Indian forestry during the 19th century was intensified by a confluence of factors, including the imperative for revenue generation, the increase of commercial crops, and the growth of the mining industry. By the year 1921, the Indian railways, which were the largest among all colonial powers, had an extensive coverage of almost 60,000 kilometers. The British established connections between ports and agricultural hinterlands, as well as metropolitan areas, in order to facilitate the exportation of primary goods and the importation of completed

products. The utilization of timber sourced from forested areas, in the shape of sleepers employed for railway tracks and as fuel for steam engines, played a crucial role in sustaining this particular system (Sivaramakrishnan 1995).

The Terai-Bhabhar region of the Kumaon region was considered uninhabitable for a long time as it was full of broadleaf forests and due to the humid environment, malaria and cholera were always prevalent in the region. The exploitation of the forests in this region was initiated by the British. The geographical regions around Chorgaliya, Nandhaur, Haldwani, Kotabag, Ramnagar, Rudrapur, and Kashipur were characterized by the presence of Sal forests. Sal timber holds significant importance due to its exceptional strength and versatility in accommodating numerous construction applications. The forests of Tanda Range are still dense and full of wildlife, from this it can be estimated how rich the Terai region was in terms of forest resources 200 years ago. Consequently, the British initially began utilizing these woodlands. With Brandis, 'the hero of Pegu' appointment as inspector general (IG), the British government now has a formal office to interfere in provincial forest management.

It is vital to understand the forest region and its characteristics in order to use forest resources. What they knew about the forests were merely its boundaries. The British recognised this as well, so they began surveying the entire woodland area of the region. A survey of 58,786 square kilometres of forest area in the entire country was conducted between 1873 and 1898 at Rs 21,88,270. In 1861, Henry Ramsay, the Commissioner of Kumaun, conducted an assessment of the forests in the region and compiled a comprehensive report. Within this report, Ramsay highlighted the presence of abundant Sal forests and proposed the creation of road infrastructure to facilitate access to these valuable resources. The largest market

for Kumaon's forest resources was Bareilly. Bareilly has been a significant trading hub since antiquity because of its commercial significance, which continued until the British rule. After the first train ran in 1853, the railway line to Bareilly was built within 20 years. The Kumaon region's abundance in forest resources led to the construction of an 87-kilometer railway line by Rohilkhand and Kumaon Railway in 1884, which connected Kathgodam to Bhojipura and then to Bareilly (Khosla, 1988). Delhi, Meerut, Moradabad Aligarh and Kanpur were the other markets for the kumaun forests. Haldwani range was the exporter of Haldu logs to the North-Western Railway Workshop at Lahore (Robertson, 1928).

The British government also built cart and bridle roads for the transportation. An important thing was that in India, not only the forest department was building roads but the public works department was also building roads. However, their ultimate goal was to take advantage of the available resources. During British administration, all of the major highways in the current Kumaon were built. The following were a few important roads-

- The Almora- Ranikhet- Kathgodam Road
- The Nainital- Kaladhungi road
- The Haldwani- Kaladhungi- Ramnagar Road
- The Ranikhet- Ramnagar Road
- The Haldwani- Tanda- Rudrapur Road
- The Haldwani- Chorgaliya- Nandhaur Road
- The Dhari- Mukteshwar- Almora Road
- The Nainital- Bhowali Road

The government subsequently appointed T.W. Webber, who was responsible for overseeing the construction of the road leading to Naini Tal, with the primary objective of conducting a survey of the hill woods. The aim of this study is to discover the geographical locations of all forested areas and determine their spatial distribution. He discovered 24,000km² tract of rich and dense forests (Dangwal, 2005). This

implies that the British had begun to invest in forest infrastructure (Stebbing, 1982).

In India, the forest infrastructure developed by the British was of two types- Administrative Forest Infrastructure and Constructive Forest Infrastructure. The administrative forest infrastructure comprises policies and policy-makers related to forests, a group of administrative people established for their management and functioning, and the establishment of various institutions and departments related to forests. However, the most crucial aspect was the knowledge of forests. When the British first thought of preserving forests for their own utilization, they knew nothing but the boundaries of the forests. A thorough knowledge of the forests was needed to work on. No true progress could have been made in this direction without developing and organizing the knowledge of Indian trees in a systematic and scientific form. A comprehensive understanding of tree species, their geographical distribution, life cycle, methods of regeneration, relationship of forests with the environment and soil, as well as their practical exploitation, was necessary (King, 1876). So, they established a class of officials trained and educated in forestry. That is how the large volumes of scholarly work on the forestry of India were produced.

On the other hand, the constructive forest infrastructure comprises various construction works such as roads, bridges, official and institutional buildings, forest rest houses, check posts, forest mills and warehouses etc. The British first made policies for forests and later developed a framework on the ground to implement those policies. They developed a hierarchy related to forest administration in which the smallest unit of administration was *beat* under the supervision of the Forest Guard (Fig. 1). The hierarchy of administrative units is given below.

Figure 1: Hierarchy of the Forest Officials

Except these officials, there were few subordinate officers and workers for other departmental and administrative works such as Head Clerk, Assistant Clerk, Range Clerk, Chaparasis, Mahawats, Moharrirs, Depot Moharrir, Cultural Jamandars, Nursery Chaukidar, Draftsman, Storekeeper and Gardener etc. For their convenience, they divided Kumaon into several forest divisions (Table 1). As the survey work continued and the knowledge of forest areas increased, more divisions were formed. Keeping in mind their management, changes were made in their geographical limits.

Table 1. Chronological division of the forests of Kumaun (Rawat, Commentary, 1985)

S.No.	Forest Divisions	Establishment
1.	Nainital	1857
2.	Ranikhet	1871
3.	Tarai- Bhabhar	1886
4.	East Almora	1893
5.	Central Almora	1903
6.	Haldwani	1911
7.	Ramnagar	1911
8.	Pithoragarh	1912
9.	West Almora	1925

With the growing importance of forests, the responsibility for overseeing all forests was transferred to the Commissioner of Kumaun in 1858. The Forest Acts enacted in 1865 and 1878 had a pivotal role in enabling the expansion of authority and governance over the aforementioned forested areas. In the year 1879, extensive portions of woods located in the sub-Himalayan region were designated as restricted areas. Within the confines of these designated forest areas, the entitlements of the indigenous inhabitants underwent a revaluation, resulting in the allocation of restricted rights that were precisely documented and delineated in the forest settlement. The year 1893 marked the

establishment of the District Protected Forests (DPF), wherein all unassessed land located beyond the reserved forests was designated for management and regulation under the authority of the Deputy Commissioner (Dangwal 2005). Limitations were enforced on the act of cutting specific species and on the clearance of any land for farming inside the DPF

Forest Rest Houses

Many forest officers and personnel were hired as the British began setting up administrative procedures linked to forests. However, there were no accommodations made for them to live, stay, and work in a challenging area like Kumaon and most of the officers had to stay in tents on camping grounds during field visits. The locals, who themselves lived in thatched houses, only spent certain times of the year in the forests, and their homes were constructed in a way that allowed them to resist the tough weather only for a few months. Making the required arrangements for the stay of forest authorities and personnel was necessary under this circumstance.

Although the progress was quite slow but the government was aware of the fact that the health of the empire depends on the health of its officials (Atkinson 1973) as by the mid-1880s, the Public Works Department started construction of more spacious and better-designed bungalows. These bungalows were first constructed using materials found in the immediate area, such as thatch, stone, clay, and other similar substances. The primary component of these bungalows was a sizable room located in the middle, and on either side of it were either two or four smaller rooms. It was in the year 1835 when construction began on the Ranipur forest rest house, which can be found around 9 km away from the city of Haridwar. The slanting roofs of this building are crafted out of tin, and the structure itself is made of stone and wood. A bird's eye view of the forest and wild animals grazing in the

grassland is available from the Machan near the FRH.

The development of forest establishments by the British was carried out in a methodical manner. The entire endeavour was completed in a series of stages. During the initial stage, a comprehensive survey of the designated region was conducted, resulting in the compilation of detailed information pertaining to the forest resources present within this area. In the first phase, the area was surveyed and complete details of the forest resources found in it were prepared. British officers used to take the help of local people to conduct surveys. In regions such as Uttarakhand, characterized by a dearth of transportation infrastructure, the British authorities asserted their dominion by compelling the local populace to participate in coerced labour. By the conclusion of the 19th century, the British implemented schemes such as *Coolie Begaar* and *Coolie Utaar* across Kumaon, which were associated with the provision of complimentary transportation services. In the second phase, they started constructing buildings in and around the forests area for the accommodation of their officials and in the next phase, they took the entire forest area under their control and started using and exploiting it. To facilitate forest utilization, they started doing other development works and established many roads, railways, timber factories, warehouses etc. But the most important work they carried was the establishment of forest rest houses which were used for several purposes. They worked as resting rooms for the British officials, eyeing centres for the forest management processes, and checkposts for the outgoing forest resources etc.

Structural Characteristics of Forest Rest Houses

By looking into the form and arrangement of forest rest houses, it can be observed that they adhere to a standardized Western layout. The designs and construction of these structures distinctly embody the influence of British rule

and architectural styles. The architectural design of all forest rest houses exhibits a high degree of similarity. The forest rest houses were strategically situated on elevated terrain within the interior of the forests, enabling enhanced surveillance over a wider expanse. The aforementioned structures were typically characterized by single or occasionally dual levels. The front of the premises featured a courtyard that was equipped with a roof supported by pillars, allowing for work to be conducted while seated, even during inclement weather such as rain. Every rest house was equipped with a minimum of three rooms. The central area of the structure is characterized by its substantial size, while two additional rooms are situated on either side. The allocation of rooms depended upon the significance and scale of the region. In order to mitigate the risk of encounters with wild animals, a rear door was constructed within the chambers to provide an additional means of escape in the event of an attack. Significant emphasis was placed on maintaining hygiene, resulting in the installation of bathroom facilities in every Forest Rest Houses (FRHs). In addition, the British constructed chimneys in accordance with Western architectural conventions as a means of safeguarding against the chilly climate. In the region of Uttarakhand, the predominant roofing material historically consisted of stone. However, due to the expensive expense associated with stone roofs, an alternative approach had been adopted for constructing roofs in rest houses. This involves the utilization of substantial wooden beams as structural support, over which a layer of tin is poured to serve as the roofing material. The roofs have consistently maintained a sloping design, whether they are constructed in the hilly terrain of Almora or the flatlands of Haldwani. Indeed, the architectural design of forest rest houses bears resemblance to the residential structures found in the hilly areas of Europe. Frequently, a watchtower was constructed in close proximity to the rest

house in order to maintain surveillance over the occurrences taking place within the forest. In general, it was employed for the purpose of surveillance and monitoring of forest fires. The forest rest houses were interconnected by roadways, and in certain rest houses, such as Sitabani, Pawalgarh, and Chorgaliya, a garage was constructed.

Furthermore, in locations where authorization for the erection of large structures was withheld, smaller edifices were erected in those areas. Range quarters were also manufactured for the Ranger. Range quarters were built in the following places:

Minor buildings were built at Kanyarichhina, Garai, Berinag, Thal, Didihat, Askot, Seniodhar, Dofar, Dharmgarh and Durum to expand the accessibility into the forests.

Conclusion

The development of timber use in the Kumaun region occurred in three phases. Initially (1815-1865), timber export was managed privately, with the government solely collecting export duties, amounting to Rs 13,668 in 1846-47. The second phase focused on improving accessibility to forests, expanding transportation infrastructure like roads, trails, and highways connecting key cities. By the late 19th century, significant accessibility to Kumaon forests was achieved. During the third phase, the government intensified exploitation efforts, coinciding with global conflicts, leading to significant exploitation of India's forests to boost Britain's economy.

The British legacy in Uttarakhand includes constructing sturdy, comfortable buildings amid poor hygiene conditions, leading to frequent epidemics. Forest rest houses built during colonial rule remain vital components of Indian forest infrastructure, now utilized for tourism. Governments capitalize on their unique locations by promoting them as tourist destinations, blending historical significance with contemporary needs. Despite their

historical context of exploitation, these structures stand as a testament to Uttarakhand's complex colonial legacy, serving both practical and symbolic roles in modern times.

Table 2. List of important Forest Rest House

Sr. No.	Forest Rest House	Year of Construction	Division
1	Sheetlakhet Forest Rest House	1873	Almora Division
2	Chorgaliya Forest Rest House	1876	Haldwani Division
3	Haldupura Forest Rest House	1890	Ramnagar Division
4	Check Jhirna Forest Rest House	1899	Corbett National Park
5	Rathuwadhabb Forest Rest House	1899	Ramnagar Division
6	Berinag Forest Rest House	1901	Pithoragarh Division
7	Binsar Forest Rest House	1902	Almora Division
8	Deenapani Forest Rest House	1905	Almora Division
9	Kalika Forest Rest House	1906	Almora Division
10	Soni Forest Rest House	1906	Almora Division
11	Sarpduli Forest Rest House	1908	Corbett National Park
12	Askot Forest Rest House	1909	Pithoragarh Division
13	Maheshkhan Forest Rest House	1911	Nainital Division
14	Dauli Forest Rest House	1911	Haldwani Division
15	Pawalgarh Forest Rest House	1912	Ramnagar Division
16	Phanto Forest Rest House	1912	Corbett National Park
17	Chunakhan Forest Rest House	1913	Ramnagar Division
18	Ransali Forest Rest House	1913	Tarai East division
19	Tanakpur Forest Rest House	1916	Haldwani Division
20	Kaladhungi Forest Rest House	1916	Ramnagar Division
21	Kilbury Forest Rest House	1920	Nainital Division
22	Ramnagar Forest Rest House	1922	Ramnagar Division
23	Ranibagh Forest Rest House	1922	Nainital Division
24	Jaulasal Forest Rest House	1923	Haldwani Division
25	Vinayak Forest Rest House	1925	Nainital Division
26	Rameshwar Forest Rest House	1927	Champawat Division
27	Bijrani Forest Rest House	1928	Corbett National Park
28	Durgapipal Forest Rest House	1928	Haldwani Division
29	Sunai Forest Rest House	1928	Haldwani Division
30	Manila Forest Rest House	1928	Ranikhet Division
31	Wajula Forest Rest House	1930	Bageshwar Division
32	Malani Forest Rest House	1930	Corbett National Park
33	Kunjakharak Forest Rest House	1935	Nainital Division
34	Sitabani Forest Rest House	1940	Ramnagar Division

Source: Working Plans of the British Government; Forest Department Uttarakhand

Table 3. Construction of Range Quarters under British Regime in Kumaun Region

S. N.	Name	Construction Year	Cost (Rs)
1.	Baramdeo	1892	311
2.	Jageshwar	1908	875
3.	Lohaghat	1914-15	1360
4.	Pithoragarh	1915-16	1450
5.	Berinag	1915-16	1422
6.	Tanakpur	1915	1000

Source: Working Plans created by British Officials

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