

14 MORAR to BORRODALE

This whole leg may be completed comfortably in one day. It may be broken at any point as far as Traigh, where there is plenty of accommodation available. Between Traigh and Borrodale, there is no accommodation, but there are hotels and guest-houses at Borrodale. In particular, it is possible to have bed and breakfast in the rebuilt Borrodale House, or Borrodale Farm, as it is now called. It is also possible to pick up a train or a bus to Mallaig or Fort William.

Mallaig to Traigh

Landranger Map: 40
OS Maps Central Grid Reference: NM 690 930

In Charles' time, the track from Mallaig to Morar went along the line followed by the present road or railway. To-day, the walk is best made along the low grassy ridge just to the east of the road and railway

The ridge is reached from the centre of Mallaig by walking up the steep old road by the church, and taking to the open ground on the left, near the top of the hill with a tall radio mast. From this point, there is no path, but the route is obvious and easy. It keeps to the crest.

After three miles, the first major landmark is the metal cross on top of the steep hill at Morar. To the west, is the Morar estuary, with Eigg and Rum on the horizon. To the east, is Loch Morar. From the cross, the route descends quickly to the River Morar, where it is possible to appreciate the difficulties that Charles and his companions had in wading across. Nowadays, the spate has been controlled by a weir. The easiest route is to descend to the main road, walk over the bridge, and follow the road, until it bends to the right after a few hundred yards.

The site of Morar's house is at Traigh, two miles further along the road. Traigh is reached by walking along the road from Kinsadel, and by climbing on to the open ground to the left at the end of the trees. From there, the route is obvious.

Distance: 5 miles (8 km)
Height of ascent: 1160 feet (350 m)
Naismith time: 2 hours 11 mins

The Cave at Morar

Landranger Map: 40
OS Maps Central Grid Reference: NM 690 930

The site of the cave, to which Morar led Charles and the MacKinnons, is uncertain. It may be one of the caves in the cliff on the south side of the Morar estuary, two miles to the north of Traigh (NM 667 929). There is also another possible cave in the cliffs on the shore nearer to Traigh. It may even be on the shore of Loch Morar near Scamadale (NM 702 905).

Traigh to Borrodale

Landranger Map: 40
OS Maps Central Grid Reference: NM 700 880

From Traigh, the route is south-east over the golf course on Mounteach Mhòr. The ground always looks boggy, even in summer, but can be crossed without much trouble. After two miles, this line reaches Sunisletter (NM 682 895), where it crosses a track. It is then an easy mile or so along this track to the isolated house at Scamadale (NM 701 901).

The next stage begins immediately behind the house, and climbs steeply by a stream into a wide corrie. The climb continues up the right-hand edge of the

corrie to the top of the ridge. From here, there are superb views of the whole length of Loch Morar. In crossing the ridge, it is possible to use the lochans (NM 710 880) on the top as landmarks to ensure that progress is made in a southerly direction. Once in the steep-sided valley of the Borrodale burn, the remainder of the descent is simple. After crossing the railway, a track leads almost directly to the entrance of Arisaig House, which is only a few yards to the west of Borrodale Farm.

Distance: 7 miles (11 km)

Height of ascent: 1700 feet (510 m)

Naismith time: 2 hours 52 mins

The Cave at Borrodale

Landranger Map: 40

OS Maps Central Grid Reference: NM 700 880

The cave is in a line of cliffs facing out to Loch nan Uamh. The easiest way is a ten-minute walk through the grounds of Arisaig House Hotel. The path begins at the west end of the rose garden. It continues for a few hundred yards through a wood, and across a fenced meadow, with a range of low wooded hills on the left. From the other side of the meadow, the path soon crosses another path, which is followed on the left up to a gap in the hills, and down to the far side. The cave can be found by turning left at the bottom of the slope, and clambering into a rocky corner, where the entrance, only eighteen or so inches in diameter, is at knee height.

Gaelic Place Name Details

<i>Name</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>Translation</i>
Loch nan Uamh	lokh nan oo-av	lake of the caves
Mounteach Mhòr	montikh vohr	large moorland
Traigh	try	beach