

15 LOCH NAN UAMH to GLEN FINNAN

This complete leg will require at least eight hours. Although there is no accommodation along the route, it is possible to break the walk conveniently at each end of Loch Beoraid by descending to the A830. Hotels, as well as bed and breakfast accommodation, may be found at many places along the A830. The railway stations at Glen Beasdale and Glen Finnan are conveniently situated near each end of the route.

Borrodale to Glen Beasdale

Landranger Map: 40

OS Maps Central Grid Reference:

NM 700 880

The simplest route is along the main road for about a mile and a half. A much more interesting, though longer, route is along the shore of Loch nan Uamh.

This longer route begins by Prince Charlie's Cave, and follows a path westwards across the meadow directly in front of the cave. Soon, the path bears sharply right towards the loch. At this point, it is important to leave the path, and make for the east perimeter fence of the meadow, where a stile marks the beginning of a path parallel to the shore. This path is now followed for a mile or so, until the cliffs of the headland, Camas na h-Eilde, bar further progress along the shore. Here, it is necessary to turn inland, and thread a way through the trees up to the Mallaig –Fort William railway line.

This stretch of the railway line is at the bottom of a deep ravine with sides, that are too steep to descend. However, it is possible to cross the line safely a few hundred yards further east, near the entrance to Glen Beasdale.

Distance: 2 miles (3 km)

Height of ascent: 260 feet (80 m)

Naismith time: 44 mins

MacLeod's Cove

Landranger Map: 40

OS Maps Central Grid Reference:

NM 700 880

The site of MacLeod's Cove is unknown nowadays. From the contemporary accounts, it seems that it was known to only a few people in 1746. According to local tradition, it was by Loch Ailort (e.g. NM 760 825), and was obliterated many years ago during some road building. However, such a position does not agree with the description of it being in a precipice. It is possible that MacLeod's Cove actually still exists, and has just never been re-discovered. It may be high up the hillside in Glen Beasdale, where a thorough search could reveal some interesting possibilities.

Glen Beasdale to Loch Beoraid

Landranger Map: 40

OS Maps Central Grid Reference:

NM 760 880

For travellers from Borrodale, the best landmark for finding the entrance to Glen Beasdale is the sharp hairpin bend in the road, a few hundred yards east of Glen Beasdale station. From there, a path leads through the trees into the glen. The path continues by the stream, and provides a pleasant walk, which is not strenuous, even when climbing to Bealach a Mhama at the head of the glen. It is then easy to contour the hillside on the left to a shallow valley just below the summit of Beinn nan Cabar.

The route to Meoble follows this valley, past Coire Beinn nan Cabar, and down Glac Mhòr to Meoble. The next stage of the route is south for about two miles by the River Meoble to Loch Beoraid.

Distance: 7.5 miles (12 km)
Height of ascent: 1220 feet (370 m)
Naismith time: 3 hours 1 min

MacEachine’s Refuge

Landranger Map: 40
OS Maps Central Grid Reference: NM 760 880

The site of MacEachine’s refuge is not really known. It is possible that it was the same bothy that Charles had used in Meoble during his flight from Culloden. There is also a tradition that the MacEachine’s refuge is actually one of several caves on the slopes of the south side of Loch Beoraid.

The traditional site for MacEachine’s refuge is easily found near the path up to the ridge from the loch. Just before emerging from the trees, the path divides. In a few yards, the left-hand fork leads to ‘Prince Charlie’s Cave’. It is just twenty yards east of the line of telegraph poles.

If this, or any other nearby cave, is MacEachine’s refuge, it is surprising that Charles should have been taken out first to Meoble. Instead, his guides would have taken him directly to it from Bealach a Mhama.

Loch Beoraid to Fraoch-bheinn

Landranger Map: 40
OS Maps Central Grid References: NM 840 880, NM 900 840

A path climbs into the wood on the slopes of the south bank of the loch. When the path leaves the trees, the route continues to the top of the ridge. Once on the ridge, the route is due east all the way to Fraoch-bheinn.

Distance: 7.5 miles (12 km)
Height of ascent: 2730 feet (1130 m)
Naismith time: 4 hours 17 mins

Fraoch-bheinn to Glen Finnan

Landranger Map: 40
OS Maps Central Grid Reference: NM 900 840

The best way to the A80 from the summit of Fraoch-bheinn is the high-level walk along the south ridge. The walk is a delightful way of ending a day. The final descent leads to a point near Glen Finnan station. Nearby is the Glen Finnan Memorial Centre, with its exhibition about the ‘45 rebellion.

Distance: 2 miles (3 km)
Naismith time: 36 mins

Gaelic Place Name Details

<i>Name</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>Translation</i>
Bealach a’ Mhama	byalakh a vahma	pass of the round hill
Beinn nan Cabar	behn nan kabar	mountain of the antlers
Camas na h-Eilde	kamas na held-eh	bay of the hind
Fraoch-bheinn	fraokh vehn	heather mountain
Glac Mhòr	glak vohr	large ravine