

20 STRATHGLASS to GLEN STRATHFARRAR

This complete circular leg will require 8 - 9 hours. There is no accommodation in Glen Strathfarrar. Camping is forbidden there.

The Hiding Place in Strathglass

Landranger Map: 26

OS Maps Central Grid Reference:

NH 290 340

While there is no documentary evidence to indicate where Charles spent the first few days in Strathglass, the traditional site is on the eastern slopes of Beinn a' Chairein (NH 294 318), near a small hamlet, Achans, which has been absorbed by the forestry plantation for many years.

Strathglass to Glen Cannich

Landranger Maps: 26 & 25

OS Maps Central Grid Reference:

NH 290 340

Since Charles walked to Glen Cannich along 'a muir road unfrequented', it is obvious that he did not walk along Glen Cannich itself. The only alternative that fits the description is via Beinn a' Chairein (NH 294 318), and along the ridge on the south side of Glen Cannich.

The route starts about two miles along the road from Cannich village to Glen Affric. Two hundred yards before the cemetery, a gate on the left-hand side of a derelict cottage gives access to a path leading steeply into the trees by a stream. After about half an hour's climbing up the left-hand side of the stream, the path emerges from the trees to cross a wide forestry road near a concrete bridge.

The continuation of the path starts about

ten yards west of the bridge, and follows the left bank of the stream. After a short distance the path reaches a small clearing with the ruins of some cottages. This settlement was probably Achans.

The path continues to climb through the trees, and leaves the forest at a point about three quarters of a mile from the summit of Beinn a' Chairein.

The route now carries on due west for about a mile along the broad moorland ridge to Creag a' Choire Dhuibh. Here, the route turns north-west, and descends through a gap between two forestry plantations. At the bottom, the river is shallow enough to cross using stepping stones, a few yards from the cottage at Liatric (NH 250 32).

Distance: 5 miles (8 km)

Height of ascent: 2050 feet (620 m)

Naismith time: 2 hours 14 mins

Glen Cannich to Glen Strathfarrar

*Landranger Map: Glen Carron
& Glen Affric*

OS Maps Central Grid Reference:

NH 290 360

In climbing to the ridge on the north side of Glen Cannich, Charles is believed to have followed the Liatric burn all the way to Meallan Odhar. The burn starts just a hundred yards east of the cottage.

Initially, there is a path, but it soon becomes lost in the bracken. However, it is easy to follow the stream to the top of the ridge at Bealach a' Bhaca, from where it is just a stroll to the summit of Meallan Odhar. The descent into Glen Strathfarrar

begins over open heather, and then follows the Allt Innis na Larach to the River Farrar, which can be crossed by a bridge just a few yards to the right.

Distance: 4 miles (6 km)

Height of ascent: 1580 feet (480 m)

Naismith time: 2 hours

The Cave in Glen Strathfarrar

Landranger Map: 26

OS Maps Central Grid Reference:

NH 340 400

The cave is three miles east down Glen Strathfarrar at NH 327 397. A convenient landmark for locating the cave is the fourth passing place on the road east of the Loch Beannacharan. Almost opposite, a narrow ravine, with steep sides some fifty feet high, leads northwards away from the road. After about a hundred yards, there is a steep wall across the ravine, and the way forward is through a narrow cleft in the wall on the right. The ravine then continues for a further twenty yards or so to a rock wall directly ahead. The entrance to the cave is a hole in the floor of a rocky ledge a few feet up the wall.

‘It is a small natural chamber, formed beneath shattered masses of rock, which have fallen together in some ancient boulderfield, and are themselves sunk into, and concealed by a deep and precipitous chasm, rent as by an earthquake, into the bosom of the eminence. In 1746, this cyclopean den was almost impenetrably concealed by a veil of copsewood and a cloud of deep forest, which extended for many miles around. From above there existed only one broken and narrow footing by which access could be obtained, and from below the only entrance was by a narrow cleft

entirely closed by brushwood, and so strait that, when discovered, only a slender person could slide himself edge-ways through the chasm. Having passed this barrier, the way seems to terminate in a ruin of broken rocks, but, upon clambering up a high step, there appears an open den piled round shattered masses, as if the hill had sunk into itself. Amidst this mighty debris, it is only when standing upon an upper shelf that there is discovered a small pit scarce large enough for the descent of one person, but at the depth of about seven feet, the cavity extends into a small square chamber, formed by the vast fragments of rock which have fallen together, and floored with smooth earth, which though damp, is defended in a great degree from the rain.’

Distance: 4 miles (6 km)

Height of ascent: 0 feet (0 m)

Naismith time: 1 hour 12 mins

Glen Strathfarrar to Cannich

Landranger Maps: 25, 26

OS Maps Central Grid Reference:

NH 330 370

From the cave, the most convenient route back to Glen Cannich is via Allt Coire nam Brathan on the other side of the river. The river can be crossed using the dam at the power station. On the southern bank, it is necessary to walk due east for about a quarter of a mile to meet the path up the Allt Coire nam Brathan. Hereabouts, there are several paths that ultimately lead in the wrong direction. In the forest, it is not possible to see where they go. It is therefore sensible to go all the way to a dilapidated bridge where the correct path begins. This path follows the stream through the forest and then over open moorland to the

top of the ridge. From here, an easy descent can be made down to Glen Cannich via the farm at Craskie. The route then continues east along the north bank of the river for just over a mile, until a footbridge crosses the

river to the road into Cannich village.

Distance: 7 miles (11 km)

Height of ascent: 1090 feet (330 m)

Naismith time: 2 hours 34 mins

Gaelic Place Name Details

<i>Name</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>Translation</i>
Allt Innis na Larach	alt inyish na larakh	stream of the meadow of the ruin
Coire nam Bruadaran	kora nam brootaran	corrie of the dreams
Bealach a' Bhaca	byalakh a vaka	pass of the hollow
Beinn a' Chairein	behn a charin	mountain of the little bog
Creag a' Choire Dhuibh	krehk a khora gu	rock of the black corrie
Meallan Odhar	myowlan oh-ar	dun mountain