

8 BENBECULA to SOUTH UIST (2)

As Charles reached Acarsaid Fhalaich and Kyle Stuley by boat, the routes described below are not those that Charles actually followed to these places. They are routes from convenient starting places on South Uist. Hotels, as well as bed-and-breakfast accommodation, are available at various places along the whole of the A865.

Acarsaid Fhalaich

Landranger Map: 22

OS Maps Central Grid Reference:

NF 810 400

The easiest access to Acarsaid Fhalaich is from the B890, which leads to Loch Skiport from the A865 at NF 774 397. The best place to park is off the B890 near a private house, about a quarter of a mile from the east end of the road.

Initially, the metalled road is followed towards Loch Skiport. After about a hundred yards, the path to Acarsaid Fhalaich goes off to the right. This path is followed round Loch Skiport for about a mile. Thereafter, it becomes indistinct. However, the route continues along the coast to the Ornish peninsula, where, starting from a narrow lochan, a shallow valley cuts south-east across the open rocky moorland of the peninsula. It emerges at the coast, close to the inlet, Acarsaid Fhalaich. The easiest way to return is by the same route.

Distance: 4 miles (6 km)

Height of ascent; 70 feet (20 m)

Naismith time: 1 hour 14 mins

Kyle Stuley

Landranger Maps: 31, 22

OS Maps Central Grid Reference:

NF 790 220

The most convenient starting place for walking to Kyle Stuley is Loch Boisdale village. The route begins along a narrow lane by the old school house (NF 784 202), which is on the north side of the A865, about a mile from the Loch Boisdale Hotel. After crossing the bridge, the route follows a path by a stream up to Loch nan Smalag. The next stage is almost due north, up a much steeper slope to the bealach between Triuirebheinn and Clett. It then descends steeply to a lonely lochan. The final stretch starts at the far side of the lochan, climbs over Bealach a' Chaolais, and follows a stream down to Kyle Stuley. The island of Stuley is just a few hundred yards from the mainland.

The contemporary accounts say that Charles and his friends spent the night in a 'nook' or 'narrow creek' whereabouts. The feature that best fits this description is the estuary of the stream itself.

The return to Loch Boisdale may reverse the same route. Alternatively, there is a somewhat longer one along the coast.

Distance: 7 miles (10 km)

Height of ascent: 1000 feet (300 m)

Naismith time: 2 hours 30 mins

Calvay

Landranger Map: 31, 22

OS Maps Central Grid Reference:

NF 790 220

The island is at the mouth of Loch Boisdale, no more than a hundred yards from the south shore of the loch. Arrangements to hire a boat to visit the island may be made with the boatmen at the pier near the Loch Boisdale hotel. The most interesting feature of the island is the ruin of the castle, in which Charles and friends rested on their arrival from Kyle Stuley.

Beinn Ruigh Choinnich

Landranger Maps: 31, 22

OS Maps Central Grid Reference:

NF 790 220

Beinn Ruigh Choinnich is the hill that dominates the horizon on the north shore of Loch Boisdale. The route begins along a narrow lane by the old school house (NF 784 202), which is on the north side of the A865, about a mile from the Loch Boisdale hotel. After crossing a bridge, it is necessary to turn sharp right, and climb steadily over grass and heather to the summit of Beinn Ruigh Choinnich. The return is by the same route.

Distance: 4 miles (6 km)

Height of ascent: 890 feet (270 m)

Naismith time: 1 hour 39 mins

The Cave behind Beinn Ruigh Choinnich

Landranger Map: 31

OS Maps Grid Reference: NF 790 220

The cave behind Beinn Ruigh Choinnich is actually on the southern slopes of Triuirebheinn, the hill overlooking Coire na Cuilc, immediately to the north of Beinn Ruigh Choinnich. Coire na Cuilc may be reached by walking along the narrow lane by the old school house (NF 784 202) on the A865, and up to the southern most tip of Loch Smalag. A stream, which enters the loch at this point from the south-east, is then followed up to Bealach an Easain, from where there is an easy descent into Coire na Cuilc.

The cave is very easily seen up on the cliffs on the left-hand side, a few hundred yards down the corrie from the bealach. The climb up to it is simple. The return to Loch Boisdale is by the same route.

Distance: 4 miles (6 km)

Height of ascent: 560 feet (170 m)

Naismith time: 1 hour 29 mins

Gaelic Place Name Details

<i>Name</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>Translation</i>
Arcasaid Fhalaich	arkashet ahlikh	secret anchorage
Loch nan Smalag	lokh nan smahla	lake of the smelt (a young coal fish)
Triuirebheinn	troo-reh vehn	group of three mountains
Beinn Ruigh Choinnich	behn roo-ee khonyakh	mountain of Kenneth's shieling
Coire na Cuilc	kora na koolk	corrie of the reeds