

THE COMPLETE SCOTLAND

THE GREAT GLEN.

Motoring.- A road (A 82) runs through the Glen all the way from Fort William to Inverness (66 miles), and in recent years it has been modernized and rebuilt in connection with the great road scheme alluded to in connection with Motoring (*Introduction*). Between Fort William and Fort Augustus the road follows the east side of the glen with the exception of 4 miles along the west side of Loch Oich. Beyond Fort Augustus the road follows the west side of Loch Ness and the River Ness to Inverness.

There is a regular daily (except Sunday) bus service between Fort William and Inverness all the year round.

(*Note:* The railway from Spean Bridge is closed for passenger traffic.)

Steamer.- Three days a week in summer (Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays) a MacBrayne steamer leaves Oban about 8.45 a.m. in connection with a steamer that leaves Banavie about 11.20 a.m., and is due at Inverness about 6.40 p.m. In the reverse direction the steamer leaves Muirtown Wharf, Inverness, about 8.30 a.m., on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, Banavie being reached about 3.50 p.m. and Oban about 6.40. Passengers can have their meals on board the boats. *Times should be verified by current time-tables.*

THE Great Glen is a deep natural depression extending north-eastwards across Scotland from Fort William to Inverness, from Loch Linnhe, or the Firth of Lorn, to the Moray Firth (see early chapter). The Glen provides the route of the Caledonian Canal.

The construction of the Canal was begun in 1805 under Telford. Much trouble was caused by the numerous rapid burns flowing from the west into the Lochy. Sluices had to be constructed through the solid rock to convey these waters under the Canal to the river, and the bed of the Lochy had to be raised 12 feet to cause that stream to fall into the Spean at Mucomir. But the greatest difficulty arose in connecting Loch Lochy with the sea at Corpach. The distance between the two points is only 8 miles, but the surface of the lake is 93 feet above sea-level. Telford overcame the difficulty by constructing a series of eight locks: "*Neptune's Staircase.*" Each has a drop of 8 feet, so that vessels passing through change their level 64 feet before again sailing in the open water. Altogether there are twenty-nine locks on the Canal.

To avoid the delay of the "translations," passengers arriving by sea or by rail at the westward end of the Canal proceed overland by train from Fort William to Banavie (3 miles) and join the Canal steamer there. In like manner passengers travelling by the Canal from Inverness land at Banavie for Fort William for trains to Glasgow, etc., or steamer to Oban.

The Canal is under the authority of the Ministry of Transport.

The total length of the passage from Corpach to Muirtown (Inverness), the eastern terminus, is 60 miles, of which only 22 miles are Canal, the remainder consisting of the lochs which the Canal connects. The Canal is 20 feet deep, 50 feet broad at the bottom, and 110 feet at the top. The portions of the natural waterway are Loch Lochy (10 miles), Loch Oich (4 miles) and Loch Ness (24 miles). The whole length of the Canal, when extended on the map, measures only 4 miles longer than a straight line drawn from one extremity to the other. The summit is 105 feet above sea-level.

From the quay at Banavie there is a full view of **Ben Nevis** (4,406 feet), the monarch of British mountains.

A mile and a half from Banavie are the remains of the so-called *Banquo's House*, or Tor Castle, an ancient seat of the chiefs of Macintosh. Two miles farther there is a fine view westward up **Glen Loy**, with its beautiful stream flowing down to the River Lochy.

Some 7 miles from Banavie the steamer arrives at **Gairlochy Locks**, at the south-western extremity of **Loch Lochy**. To the left on the west side of Loch Lochy is Glengarry Forest, with a fine conical hill, **Ben Tee** (2,957 feet), here hidden by an intervening hill, but well seen from Loch Oich farther on. Here the road from Banavie crosses the Canal and the River Lochy and joins the main route from Fort William a little west of Spean Bridge (see later chapter). The views of Ben Nevis from this corner are very fine, and north-eastward are glimpses up **Glen Gloy** (*later*).

From Gairlochy a road up the western shore of Loch Lochy bears westward in a mile or so to **Achnacarry** (15 miles from Fort William), a modern residence at the foot of **Loch Arkaig**, a long narrow sheet of water. Between the mansion, and the lake is a fine avenue of gigantic beech-trees called the **Dark Mile**, planted by Lochiel before he set out for the Forty-Five. It has been much thinned, however, by recent gales and cuttings. Near its centre is a cave in which "bonnie Prince Charlie" hid in his flight from Culloden. On Loch Arkaig was hidden the famous "treasure," the root of so much Jacobite intrigue and romance. A fair road runs along the northern shore of Loch Arkaig to the west end of the loch.

Loch Lochy is a river-like lake, 10 miles long and a mile wide, connected at its northern end with Loch Oich by a short cut of the Canal containing the **Laggan Locks**. A mile and a half beyond the locks the road crosses over to the west bank at the foot of Loch Oich, a most beautiful lake forming the summit level of the Canal. Steep mountains fringe it on the south, and pretty islets dot its bosom. Beside the road near the south end of the loch is a strange monument, overlooking a spring called Tobar nan Ceann - the **Well of the Heads**. It was erected as a memorial of the vengeance inflicted on the murderers of some members of the family of Macdonald of Keppoch. The heads of the seven murderers were presented to the chief of the clan after having been washed in this spring.

Invergarry (*hotel: 15 rooms; R. and b., 8s. 6d.*) stands in the middle of the west side of the loch, amid charming scenery. On a rocky headland are the ruins of a Castle long the home of the MacDonells of Glengarry. Prince Charles spent part of the night of August 26, 1745, within its walls, and also took shelter in it the first night after the battle of Culloden.

Invergarry to the West Coast.- A road runs all the way and a motor runs on certain days between Invergarry Station and Glenquoich, calling at Tomdoun. The first portion is through **Glen Garry** to *Tomdoun Inn*, 12 miles. There turn to the right and proceed by Glen Loyne to *Chuanie Inn*, 24 miles. Thence the road is westward through **Glen Shiel** to Shiel Bridge at the head of Loch Duich.

From just short of the bridge a road climbs over the hills by the Ratagain Pass (1,116 feet) to **Glenelg** (*hotel*), looking across the Sound of Sleat to Skye. The ferry from Glenelg to Kylerhea in Skye now carries cars. Another road runs along the south side of Loch Duich to Totaig, where there is a ferry to Dornie (no cars,

boat kept at Dornie). The main road crosses Shiel Bridge, runs round the head of Loch Duich and then westwards, keeping very high up, to **Dornie**. Here at the entrance of Loch Long is the picturesque **Eilean Donan Castle**, once a ruin but now completely restored. From Dornie there is a ferry (cars, 6s.; motor-cycles, 1s.) to **Ardelve** (*Loch Duich Hotel*), from which the road continues to **Kyle of Lochalsh** (see later chapter). Three miles west from Ardelve a hilly road strikes northward to **Strome Ferry**, the western gateway to the Glen Carron route to Dingwall.

From Tomdoun Inn the left-hand branch of the road follows the course of the Garry to **Loch Quoich** and the head of **Loch Hourn**, a distance of 17 miles, but the descent to Kinlochhourn is dangerously steep for motors, and there is no accommodation there. It may be better to explore the beautiful scenery of Loch Hourn by sea from Mallaig or from **Glenelg**, on the eastern side of the Sound of Sleat. (*See above.*)

This wild corner is the western terminus of grand walks over the mountains. **Glen Lichd** (*see later chapter*), the foot of which is crossed by the road at Croe Bridge, near the head of Loch Duich, leads along the south-western flank of **Ben Attow** (3,383 feet), and by following the Croe stream to the head of the valley and thence skirting the eastern shoulder of the mountain, one can drop into the head of Glen Affric, and by Lochs Affric and Beneveian reach Invercannich (*see later chapter*).

Another route from Croe Bridge ascends the glen on the northern side of Ben Attow and then drops to the southern end of Loch Beallach, whence Glen Grivie leads eastward to the head of Glen Affric and the above-mentioned route.

From the northern end of Loch Beallach the stream may be followed past the **Fall of Glomach** (the highest in Scotland and said to be 350 feet high), by a path high up on the west side of the chasm, to the road in Glen Elchaig, which is reached by stepping-stones across the foot of Loch-na-Leitreach. Westward from this point the road leads down Glen Elchaig to Killilan and the head of Loch Long and then along the western shore of that Loch to Ardelve; north-eastward, 1½ miles beyond Loch-na-Leitreach, a path climbs from the Iron Lodge beside a stream to little Loch-an-Droma; and descends eastward to Loch Lungard and the shores of Loch Mullardoch, whence a road runs down Glen Cannich to Invercannich. (*See also later chapter*)

Fort Augustus.

Access.- Daily bus services (except Sundays) to and from Inverness, Spean Bridge and Fort William. *The railway from Spean Bridge is closed for passenger traffic.*

Hotels.- *Lovat Arms, Caledonian (temp.)*, (14 rooms; R. & b., 8s.).

The fort which gave name to the town was built in 1715. In 1867 it was sold to the Lord Lovat of that day, and in 1876 his son presented the site to the Benedictine Order for the erection of a monastery, which in 1882 was raised to the dignity of an **Abbey**. Visitors are admitted on application. Only men are admitted to the library, but certain portions of the Abbey are open to both sexes. About a quarter of a mile distant is a small nunnery.

The village attracts visitors, with boating, fishing and golf, and it is a fairly good centre. Fort Augustus is at the northern end of a rough track, a derelict Wade road, over the

Corrieyairack Pass (2,507 feet) to the Spey at Laggan (*see later chapter*), 25 miles of rough going, with no inns or shelter, but with glorious views.

About 2 miles from Fort Augustus, on the right, is **Glen Doe**, through which a very steep road leads to **White Bridge** (*Hotel*) in Strath Errick and thence to Foyers and along the east side of Loch Ness to Inverfarigaig and Inverness.

Fort Augustus is at the head of **Loch Ness**, one of the, largest fresh-water lakes in Scotland: 24½ miles long, 1 - 1½ - miles wide and with a maximum depth of 754 feet; and famed, among other things, for the "monster" which disturbed its peace in recent years.

Six miles from Fort Augustus is **Invermoriston**, on the west shore, where are a pier and an hotel (10 rooms; *R. and b., 8s. 6d.*).

Invermoriston to the West Coast by Glen Shiel.- The road lies along the north bank of the river *Moriston*, and conducts one through the mountains of the interior to *Cluanie Inn* (25 miles), and thence down Glen Shiel to Loch Duich and to Balmacara (53 miles), and Kyle of Lochalsh (60 miles, *see later chapter*), or to Glenelg Hotel (46 miles). The cave in which Prince Charlie lived for four days, under the care of the "Seven Men of Glenmoriston," is in the mountains overhanging Glenmoriston on the north.

A few miles beyond Invermoriston, **Mealfuarvonie** ("the round hill of the cold upland"), a dome-shaped mountain, 2,284 feet in height, rises steeply above the western shore of the loch; it is well seen from **Foyers** (*hotel*) on the opposite side of the loch. Near the pier are the **Falls of Foyers**.

At the mouth of the rich Highland vale of **Glen Urquhart**, on the western shore of Loch Ness, are the picturesque ruins of **Urquhart Castle**, originally built in the twelfth century. The first castle was besieged by Edward I, in 1303, and in its place he erected this formidable-looking fortress. It peers down on the loch, which is here 750 feet deep. (*Admission to Castle, weekdays, 10 - 4, 6 or 7; Sundays 11 - 3 or 4.*), 3d.

The road here makes a loop round the mouth of the Urquhart, passing through **Milton** (*Drumnadrochit Hotel*), amid charming scenery (1½ miles from Temple Pier). (Bus service on weekdays between Glen Urquhart and Inverness.)

A good road runs up Glen Urquhart, passing Loch Meiklie, a mile long, to **Invercannich**, in Strath Glass (about 14 miles), whence one may go northward to Beauly; and a pretty road goes northward from Milton and through to Beauly (*see also later chapter*). Some 2 miles south-west from Drumnadrochit are the **Falls of Divach**, higher than Foyers.

Four miles north of Temple Pier is the hamlet of **Abriachan**, a pretty spot, with a pier.

At the north-eastern extremity of Loch Ness, beyond **Dores Pier**, is **Aldourie Castle**. Then we reach a peninsula which marks the division of Loch Ness from **Loch Dochfour**, a pretty lake with finely wooded banks. A little farther we come to the outlet of the river *Ness*, and about half a mile beyond reach **Dochgarroch Lock**. Three miles from the lock we reach Muirtown Wharf, the terminus and starting-place of the Caledonian Canal steamers, a mile from **Inverness** (*later chapter*).