

The Call of the Mountains

by Max Landsberg

Excerpts included:

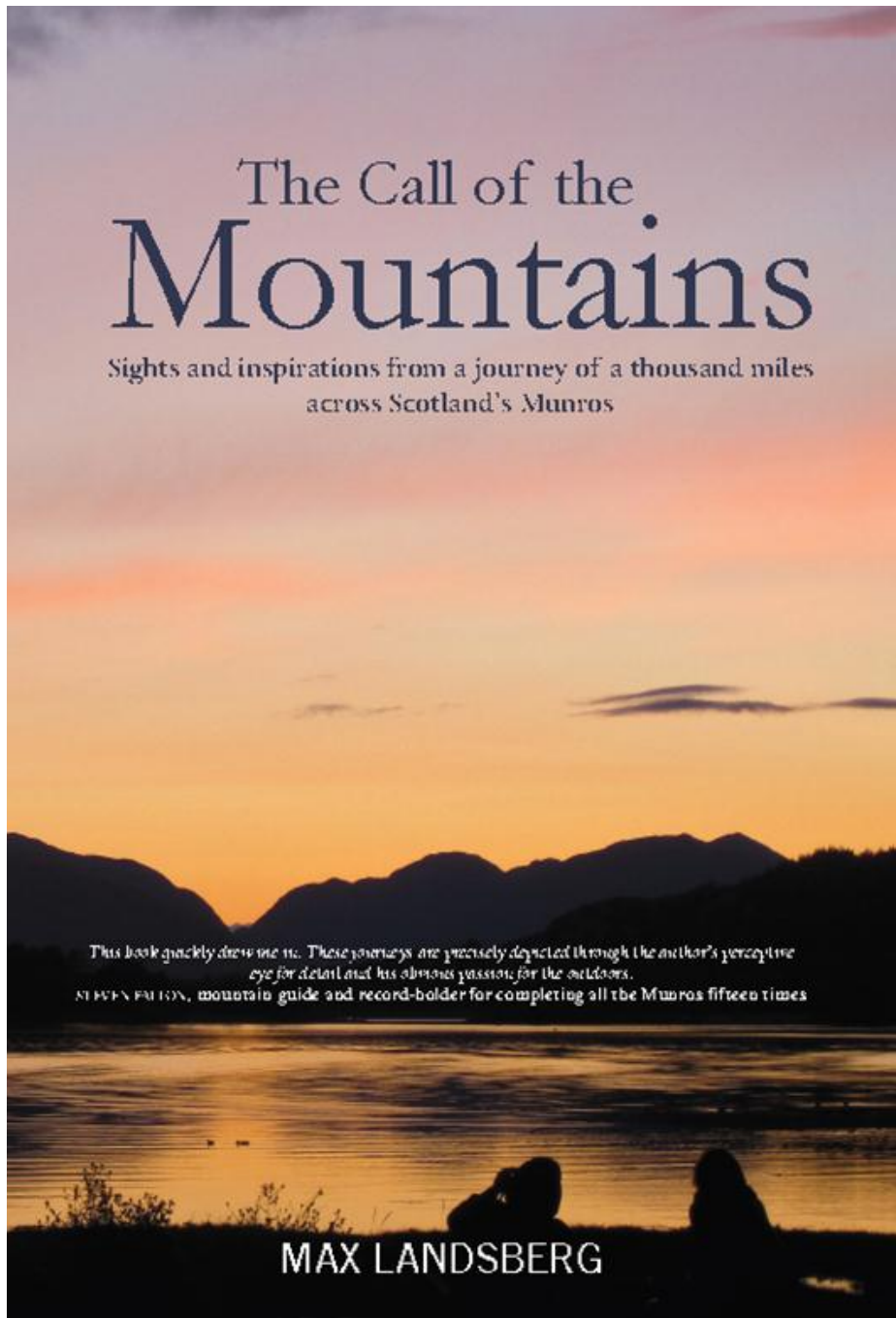
- Cover
- Contents & Map
- Introduction
- Chapter 1
- Example pen-and-ink
- Example colour section

“This book quickly drew me in. These journeys are precisely depicted through the author's perceptive eye for detail and his obvious passion for the outdoors.”

STEVE FALLON, mountain guide and record-holder for completing all the Munros 15 times

“Scotland has inspired legions of explorers and adventurers; this book will show you why. A wonderful journey through landscape, culture and obsession.”

MYLES FARNBANK, Director of Training, Wilderness Scotland



Contents

The Calling		9
PHASE 1	HOOKED	13
1	First steps, Perfect Vistas	15
2	Gentle Foothills	25
3	Inaccessible Pinnacles	37
PHASE 2	BAGGING	50
4	Tracing the Fault Line	53
5	North by North-West	69
6	Lochnagar and Beyond	83
7	The Utter North	97
8	The Point of No Return	109
PHASE 3	TROPHIES	117
9	Torridon	121
10	The Cairngorms Proper	133
11	Ben Nevis, Glencoe, and More	145
PHASE 4	FLOW	160
12	A Pound on the Foot	163
13	Zigs and Zags...	173
14	May the Road Rise Up to Meet You	193
PHASE 5	BROADER HORIZONS	205
15	‘Going Out, to Go In’ and vice versa	209
Acknowledgements		222
Suggested Reading		223
Appendices		229
Index		247

Further photographs, videos and fly-throughs are available at
www.thecallofthemountains.com/graphics.html

The principal Munro ranges with selected lochs and cities



The Calling

*Every day is a journey,
and the journey itself is home.*

MATSUO BASHO *Narrow Road to the Interior*

THE MOUNTAINS OF Scotland: towering in grandeur above ancient foundations, born two billion years before the first plant saw life; rifted and faulted by earthquake and then gouged and pock-marked by ice; once home to the Gaels and their kings – and now haunted by their spirits and the stag.

You can walk into these mountains, but you never come all the way back. For though Scotland's mountains may not be the highest in the world, they are certainly amongst the most awe-inspiring and enchanting. From the towering pinnacles of Skye, to the high rolling plateau of the Cairngorms; from the bonnie braes of Ben Lomond to the weeping cliffs of Glencoe; from the rocky battlements that encircle Loch Arkaig, to the gentle folds of Ben Lawers as it spills down to Loch Tay: on offer here are scenes of unrivalled splendour, landscapes of unparalleled variety, and a magic ground for personal connection, inspiration and transformation.

These are places of accessible adventure – we leave behind the safety of the lush glen to cross the swooping moor, clamber up through craggy corridors, and with tinkling burn then spatey cascade as our sometime guide, we reach at last the grand summits of these lands.

It is through these realms that I hope you will accompany me on a journey for body, for mind and perhaps for something more.

* * *

My own journey started by way of the accident described in the next chapter. Then, having fallen into the wonderland of Scotland's mountains, I was quickly captivated and drawn into an ardent adventure that called me northwards from my home in London, to the land I had left when I was just three years old. My mission eventually became a series of expeditions to climb all 282 'Munros' – Scotland's mountains of 3,000 feet or more in height. Working my way through the list of mountains that Sir Hugh Munro had originally published in 1891 became my vast and

roving obsession. More importantly, it brought me to the highest vantage points from which to embrace the best of Scotland's landscapes.

Just as I had not originally intended to climb all those peaks, neither had I intended to write about them. But several years ago, my neighbours' children clamoured so loudly to hear of my recent trek to Everest Base Camp that I agreed to give a short presentation at their school. I could not resist mentioning Scotland too, and so wide-eyed with excitement were the kids as my own passion for those nearer hills became evident that I resolved to share these life-affirming experiences.

So with field notes, sketches, photos and maps spread out before me, with memory as a guide and with pen and paper as company, I recalled my circuit of the hills set out in this account.

The Call of the Mountains is intended as an impressionistic companion for your forthcoming Munro journey, whether you are about to embark on it in earnest or in your armchair – or perhaps it will be a reminder, as you recall the outings you have already completed.

This account offers you: 1) short stories that conjure a sense of place in these magical lands; 2) anecdotes that give you a comprehensive sense of the drama and adventure involved in climbing all the Munros; 3) some digestible 'sandwiches' along the way, for as I take you through each walk-scape I also aim to give you a hint of history here, a gist of geology there, and a bit of flora, fauna and culture in between, and 4) a reflection on the stages by which any interest can swell into a passion and escalate into an obsession.

To share the sense of expedition, of discovery and of growth, I have sequenced the chapters around the actual journeys and side-trips I made in completing the round of Munros.¹ You can of course climb the Munros in any sequence, and though they may be visited piecemeal by those who live in Scotland, those who live abroad will require longer visits. This account is therefore typical rather than prescriptive.

Primarily, though, I want to take you where the scenic ingots are buried: a few are overgrown, some overlooked, all under-visited.

* * *

But what can you expect from such an adventure, beyond the delights and inspirations I have already mentioned? If you walk these routes in full or in part, you will certainly witness the soaring eagle, and perhaps the birth

¹ Traditionally, a round of all the Munros is 'completed', and I have used that spelling throughout this book.

of a fawn; you will share the camaraderie of canny ghillies; you will gain benefits to health and heart, and you will have unexpected adventure.

Whether you want it or not, there will be adventure. Though Scotland's mountains are not as high as those in some other countries, they *are* among the highest in Britain: of the 1,000 highest peaks in Britain, all but 58 are in Scotland. As you walk for more than 1,000 miles horizontally, and over 100 miles vertically; as you expend half a million calories; as the weather changes within a few minutes from brilliant sunshine to storm-force wind, rain and hail and back again: there is bound to be adventure, and something will go wrong! So take a detailed guidebook, maps and compass, and take the precautions indicated in the section on Safety, so you will not have to call on the Mountain Rescue Service, whose excellence and professionalism probably saved my life, as you will soon see.

You can reach all but one of the summits on foot; only the 'Inaccessible Pinnacle' requires roped climbing. In just 120 days of hillwalking, this entire journey is within the grasp of most reasonably fit people, and uniquely in Scotland with its generous Access Code, you can walk almost anywhere. The opportunities are unbounded, and the benefits immense.

* * *

Ultimately, this book aims to offer signposts to 120 days of rapture. For that is surely the true power of Scotland's mountains: their ability to hold us in awe – day after day, visit after visit, in rain or in shine. This account is perhaps the last cry of an obsession determined to find a new host before its old host lays it to rest. It is offered as a conspiratorial escort: one to help you escape in mind or body from the yang of town to the yin of country.

But mountains change us more than we change them. That is why we must visit them, cherish them and preserve their purity. They allow us to revive our connection with the natural world. They hold the potential to be our art galleries, our gymnasiums and our sacred sanctuaries all in one.

'These are *my* hills,' I think, irrationally, as I reach the top of my last Munro. 'I have been up them, and on them, and across them, and down them. I know their ways, their idiosyncrasies and their secrets. And they will live within me while my memory still functions.'

These may be my hills, but they can be your hills too.

Phase I – Hooked

EVERY JOURNEY OF a thousand miles starts with a first step, said Lao Tzu. But of course not every first step is destined to grow into a journey of a thousand miles!

So how does a fancy become a fascination, a pastime become a passion, a step become a journey?

My own enthusiasm for hillwalking and the Munros started from a modest base: though I was reasonably fit, I had never run a marathon or even a quarter of one; I enjoyed a jog in Richmond Park, but was neither health fanatic nor eco-warrior.

My interest in the Munros was ignited by a lucky spark and was undoubtedly fanned by provident weather and fortunate choices of early outings. Gradually I became beguiled by the spectacular scenes, sounds, and smells, by starting to progress through Sir Hugh Munro's List, and by the bewitching culture of Celtic and Gaelic Scotland.

Over the course of the next three chapters, I chart how I came to be in turn attracted, intrigued, fascinated and then hooked by hillwalking in general and the Munros in particular. *First Steps* recounts the inspiring circuit of a glaciated valley, an outing that, with hindsight, I realise was a fortunate first expedition. Scenic beauty is surely one of the main attractions for any walker, so this chapter also examines our notions of beauty, intrigue and awe, drawing from some unusual sources.

Gentle Foothills recounts two journeys across the southern Highlands, with auspicious blue skies and no sign yet of the gales and storms that would eventually beset me. I discover the attraction of bite-sized adventures – and start to take a greater interest in The List, which this chapter explains in more detail.

Inaccessible Pinnacles brings me close to danger and indeed to death, with perils emerging from the least likely places. Although I am no junkie for adrenaline, this danger does add simultaneously excitement and sobriety to what might otherwise have become a more frivolous pastime. On Skye and the mainland, a magic brew of rich history and Gaelic murmurings secure my commitment to continue.

It is often by accident that we embark on those personal missions that we will ultimately value most highly. We are intrigued when we are open to novel experiences or callings. Early on, our progress is driven more by motivation and enthusiasm than by the acquisition of skill or technique.



The Ring of Steall, South of Ben Nevis

CHAPTER I

First Steps, Perfect Vistas

Mountains are the beginning and the end of all natural scenery.

JOHN RUSKIN *Modern Painters*

THE FIRST STEP on my journey of a thousand miles is down off the single-decker bus that has brought me from Fort William, through the winding glen that skirts the base of Ben Nevis, to the tiny hamlet of Achriabhach, which means ‘speckled field’.

Stretching out before me, the route starts off through a gorge often dubbed ‘the Himalaya of Britain’, then emerges into Arcadian meadows spreading below the shimmering feet of the country’s second highest waterfall, before crossing a three-wire bridge that straddles an oft-gushing torrent. Later on it will range onwards and upwards to one of Scotland’s finest ridge walks, around a perfectly glaciated hanging valley, via ‘The Devil’s Ridge’ – and all of this under the brooding watch of Ben Nevis...

With this Ring of Steall as my first Munro adventure, I am bound to become hooked, for it combines within one longish circular walk some of the best hillwalking in Britain, if not the world. But it does carry a risk of fatality, as I am to discover.

A few months earlier, I had decided to test my mettle. Was I still fit enough to complete the Three Peaks Challenge – climbing the highest peaks in Scotland, England and Wales within 24 hours? I had Googled the event and noticed the momentous words: ‘the challenge includes the ascent of Ben Nevis... one of Scotland’s 283 Munros’. ‘What’s a Munro?’ I wondered. A few clicks of the mouse revealed the grandeur of these hills, and a few more clicks had me booked on my first trip to visit them.

Later, with years of hillwalking experience under my boots, I will realise how ill-prepared I am for this venture: too few warm clothes, no spare gloves, inadequate headwear, too little food, no spare compass. And despite walking solo, I have not left details of my route with anyone who could raise the alarm if I fail to return. I am an accident waiting to happen. In my defence, I can only claim that I am following the route from a guidebook published by the Ramblers Association. I have mistakenly conjured up images of their members being matronly aunts in well-polished brogues successfully rambling through this challenge. They have lured me into a false sense of security!

The Ring of Steall

Although the hamlet of this speckled field is set in meadowy surroundings, the violent smash and splutter of water under its bridge warns of large corries and churning cascades higher up.

The easy gradient of the preliminary tarmac road therefore comes as a surprise, though after the upper car park the road soon narrows into a walkers' path, which itself slims to a ledge barely a foot wide in places. On stones that are just a bit too sloping and nearly always too polished, I tread carefully through the delightful gorge alongside the energetic river – The Water of Nevis.

This stretch of the trek has an otherworldly feel to it, with the Water now churning many feet below me, cascading down the rift it has incised, having sped over its ten-kilometre journey from the corners of its huge catchment basin which straddles the southern slopes of Ben Nevis and other more secret places.

I am shaded by towering canopies of trees that somehow cling to crack and fissure of the steep rock walls above me. And it is then that I find one of the greatest delights of British hillwalking: to emerge suddenly into a vast, meadowy expanse of grassy sward that stretches across gravelly flats.

Flat as a billiard table, this glacially deposited plain is a stage on which all the required elements of hill-theatre have been set: the gently meandering river, the lone rowan tree, the hummocky foothills offering a step up to higher peaks beyond. And ahead, centre-stage, spouting from a hanging valley that emerges high up on the hillside, is the lead actor – the Steall waterfall itself. One hundred and twenty metres of churning, tumbling spume first spews then sprays and spatters in near-vertical fall. This waterfall has one of the longest cascades in Britain – more than twice the drop of Niagara Falls.

The flat Steall Meadows mark the turning point into the next stage of the expedition. This area is also a crossroads for other paths through the adjacent glens and over neighbouring hills, and so the small cluster of tents is perhaps to be expected. I approach, but there is no sign of life: if a walker is not walking, he or she is probably sleeping...

The precise point of transition from the easy first section of the day to the harder next section must surely be the famous three-wire bridge that straddles the Water of Nevis, stretching from its tentative hold on the eastern side of the meadows. The bridge looks rickety, but my desire to avoid wetting my boots in the river eventually overcomes my fear of the required high-wire act. I edge out and as I sidle my feet along the single

lower tightrope, I slide my hands cautiously along the higher wires which stretch out taut at shoulder level.

On the farther bank, I soon see that the hope of keeping my boots dry is naïve in the extreme. They will surely be sodden, and thus much heavier, after the immediate next challenge: the crossing of the Steall Waterfall after its 120-metre cataract. In fact, I remain dry-shod as I cross the tumbling Waterfall, but the boggy stretch on its far side eventually gets me, consuming me up to the ankles.

It is now a hard pull up to the ridge, even though a stalkers' path lofts me helpfully. When I had first read of such paths, I had assumed that stalkers' paths were *poachers'* paths. This was of course a mistake, because while it is perfectly feasible to shoot a deer without the knowledge of the estate owner, it would be hard work to drag its carcass off a 3,000-foot high mountain. Poaching does take place, especially at night and at lower levels, but these higher-level paths are used by the estates for required culls or commercial shoots.

This first experience was supposed to be an easy introduction, but is now becoming quite testing. It demands that I continue uphill at a gradient of 45 degrees for over an hour, while scanning for the correct route all the way. I would find that no treadmill training can prepare you for this. Yet my motivation is strong as my first Munro beckons, and from behind me Ben Nevis is watching, perhaps waiting to see whether I will make it.

Easing gradients bring life to weary legs, and soon I escape the solitary, heather-edged tramline of the stalker's path and am now high up on the shoulder of the hill. I would learn that every walk has a false summit or two: the bound-to-be-broken promise that the true summit beckons. This hill has more than its fair share of false summits and the suspense grows.

Finally, finally, over the next brow, a tiny pimple appears and it grows as I approach. The path flattens further and the cairn gradually comes into full view. It is in a sorry state – more a pile of stones than an edifice. But it *is* the top. At last I am face-to-face – or rather, boot-to-bald-pate – with my first Munro, *An Gearanach* (the complainer).²

Of even greater reward, however, is the stunning spectacle spread out before me – the huge hanging valley that is the catchment bowl for the Steall waterfall extends out far below, laced with its meandering river that suddenly dives off over a lip and out of sight, down to the place where it tried to drench me earlier. You are not alone up here, though, for joining

2 Italics mark the first mention of ascending a Munro; see Appendix 1 for pronunciations, heights, and precise locations.

you in peering into this valley from all angles are both an exaltation of rocky arêtes and a herd of mountains, their broad shoulders muscular, as if permanently flexed.

After a five-minute stop, a sandwich and an airing of the socks, I press onwards. The path soon narrows severely to just a few feet in width, with sharp drops on both sides. This experience is not yet scary, though it does provide several kilometres of brisk introduction to true Scottish hillwalking: that is, a rope would not go amiss, a helping hand would be appreciated, and fingers are crossed against a gust of wind...

The ridge slopes down steeply, then demands a stiff hike up before reaching the top of the next Munro: *Stob Coire a' Chairn* (peak of the corrie of the cairn). It is well-named, for the frost-shattered quartzite top has clearly offered the cairn builders more material than did the previous top, and I too contribute a stone to the structure.

The next ridge twists away into the mists, but halfway along it – with four hours of walking behind me, and with another four still to go – I start tiring rapidly, yet to understand what ‘hill fit’ really means. And the clouds are descending fast.

With great reluctance I play it safe, and decide to miss out the third Munro of the day, Am Bodach (the old man), and this has two consequences. Firstly, it will be another six years before I reach the top of the Old Man, with a great deal of extra re-climbing required to do so. Secondly, it means I shall have to take the not-to-be-recommended bypass route, which contours around the inside surface of the bowl-shaped corrie.

You will recall from school geography that a ‘corrie, cirque or cwm’ is a scooped out hollow, gouged from the mountain by the head of a glacier. Across the extremely steep rock-face of such a scoop, I try to follow what the Ordnance Survey map promises is a path. Later, Google Earth will prove there is indeed a path, but underfoot I can find only huge jumbles of large slippery rocks temporarily lodged at inconvenient angles. It would have been less effort to have climbed the Old Man after all, but it is too late to return and, with reassuring glimpses of the onward route visible through occasionally lifting cloud, I re-join the ridge beyond the Old Man’s feet.

The path snakes on along the rim of the corrie and over Sgor an Iubhair – a peak that had been a Munro for 16 years until it was demoted in 1997 (these things do happen!). I now believe there is only one obstacle ahead: The Devil’s Ridge. I had spent several weeks worrying about this crest, with the need either to tiptoe over its pinnacles, or to take the alternative bypass path with its ‘bad step’. For the uninitiated, negotiating a ‘bad step’ feels a bit like driving a car with bald tyres around a bend

that suddenly becomes tighter, icier and increasingly cambered off in the wrong direction – with the accelerator jammed on. The adrenaline carries me over the step; it would be a more serious proposition in winter.

But there is a further obstacle: *Sgurr a' Mhaim* (peak of the large rounded hill). It is an obstacle not because this Munro is so high, but because of the unrelenting challenge of losing 1,000 metres of altitude down the steep slopes on its far side – slopes strewn with large stones and rubble for most of the way. From my earliest days on the Munros, and in common with many a walker, I have kept brief notes of the highlights and the lows. My entry for this day includes: 'Lo: final knee-crunching descent in one long haul back to Polldubh. 15 / 1,900 / 8:30' (the numbers indicate kilometres travelled / metres of ascent / and time passed, excluding stops).

The safety of the valley eventually attained, however, I turn around to survey the mountains of the day. But they are gone, obscured by the vastness of that mountain called 'the peak of the large rounded hill'. Other mountains crowd around me though. They radiate a timeless quality that somehow exudes familiarity. The vast rounded knobbls of hillside and mountain profile seem to be the brows of immense elephants, and the herd is gathering around me to bid goodbye. I wonder for how long they will remember me.

* * *

The Caledonian Sleeper takes me back to London overnight, and once in the office I strike up conversation with a burly Scot – a colleague I have not met before. It transpires he was a Royal Marine, and when I tell him of my weekend's outing, he turns white.

'You have to be so vigilant on that ridge,' he says. Two years earlier a friend of his, a fit Marine in his 20s on manoeuvres with 30 other Marines, was blown off the eastern side of the high-level horseshoe walk, to his death.

Seared into my memory for all time, however, is the way this first experience of the Munros combined Beauty, Intrigue, and the Awe-inspiring sublime. And from the first day on these fair hills I start an unbroken habit: to replay each route in my mind several times a year. I know the fragility of memory, for my father's Alzheimer's has just deprived him of any memory that the seminal textbooks on theoretical physics that sit on his bookshelves had been written by him. The sound of my own voice, recorded in my camera on snippets of video, provides me with a more tangible insurance policy against ever forgetting the hills; and there would be more fabulous hills to come.



Beauty, Intrigue, Awe: what makes for an enthralling landscape vista?

Once seen, the Steall Meadows are never forgotten, and at least once in every Munro outing, we are treated to a vista so utterly captivating that it makes us gasp. A full tour of the Munros presents in spectacular manner all of the elemental themes, including ‘the forest primeval, the river of life, and the sacred mount’, as Simon Schama dramatises them in *Landscape and Memory*. Indeed, walkers typically cite such visual treats as the primary reason that they go out hiking.

So it is worth pausing a moment to examine what it is that grips us: what are the most archetypal landscape scenes, and why do they resonate with us so strongly?

Beauty

Firstly, there is the scene of sheer prettiness that evokes an instant feeling of wellbeing and relaxation. A vision of distant hazy mountains, symmetrically arranged and viewed across a placid loch, perhaps with a jetty in the foreground, and a light mist rising. You breathe in deeply and exhale gently; you are literally inspired; any tension you are holding dissipates instantly; you drink in your surroundings; your mind is eased.

This picture comes from the world of the Neo-classical and the Old Master painters. Symmetry and the Golden Ratio prevail. There is order, and in order lies stability. From stability derives security. And from security seeps a feeling of relaxation and wellbeing. Not surprisingly, a vista like this has become the best-selling image for Britain’s largest poster company.

Our subconscious – or at least a part of it – seeks this smooth, rhythmic, predictable, safe elegance of the Beautiful scene.

Intrigue

There is a different type of scene; one that draws us in and makes us wonder what lies beyond it: there is perhaps a path or river in the foreground, winding past a clump of trees and ruined building in the middle distance and disappearing off into the foothills to the mountains beyond. It calls on us to explore it, to get involved.

Research from around the world shows that most cultures prize such

a scene highly. It has features that offer a greater likelihood of survival in an evolutionary sense.

For example, in *With People In Mind: Design And Management Of Everyday Nature*, researchers from the University of Michigan found respondents assigned low preference to views that are hard to read: ones that have either large expanses of undifferentiated landcover, or have dense vegetation and obstructed lines of sight.

In contrast, favoured scenes are easy to read and explore. They are *coherent* (orderly, with distinguished areas and a few repeating images showing simply contrasting textures), and *legible* (a few distinctive features or memorable landmarks that ease orientation and navigation). The favoured scenes also foster exploration when they are *complex* (rich in variety and replete with opportunity) and *mysterious* (holding the promise that one can find out more if one keeps on going: curved pathways and partially exposed glimpses and prospects).

The Intriguing scene asks us to engage with it. It may be less pretty than the Beautiful scene, but instead it provides a canvas on which we can project our journey.

Awe

But we have a darker side too; the one that craves the scene that *almost* overwhelms us. We stand right next to a towering cliff and stare upwards, it is so high that – even standing on the ground – we are overcome with vertigo; or we are perched at the extreme edge of a crumbling precipice, gaze down at the scene below and know we are on the very brink of calamity, millimetres from death.

Our appetite for these Awe-inspiring views has more recent and complex origins. Before the 18th century, there is virtually no record on canvas or paper of delight in this feeling. But the Industrial Revolution and the Age of Enlightenment – from roughly 1650 onwards – changed all that. Perhaps because basic human needs were becoming better met (at least those of the upper and emerging middle classes), our forebears could afford to adventure and, perhaps, were driven to it by increasing levels of comfort.

And across what vast territories they adventured: from politics (American Independence in 1776, the French Revolution in 1789); to theology and geology (James Hutton's ground-breaking *Theory of the Earth* in 1785); through the Arts (Romanticism making the whole person the observer, not just his brain; Shelley, Byron, Coleridge, Wordsworth); mountaineering (Horace-Bénédict de Saussure and the Benedictine monk

Placidus a Spescha systematically exploring every Alp prior to 1800); and tourism (with the continental Grand Tour *de rigueur* from the 1750s onwards).

This was the age that saw the Awe-inspiring distinguished from the merely Beautiful or the Intriguing. It introduced horror, terror and brute Nature as experiences to be sought out and relished.

The English critic and dramatist John Dennis recounts crossing the Alps in 1963, where the attraction of the experience is in part that it is *'mingled with Horrors, and sometimes almost with despair.'*

Thomas Gray, poet of *Elegy* fame, wrote in 1765 of his trip to the Scottish Highlands that

the mountains are ecstatic, and ought to be visited in pilgrimage once a year. None but those monstrous creatures of God know how to join so much beauty with so much horror.

In *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful* (1757), Edmund Burke writes that

whatever... operates in a manner analogous to terror is a source of the sublime; that is, it is productive of the strongest emotion which the mind is capable of feeling.

In *Mountains of the Mind*, Robert Macfarlane isolates a succinct statement from David Hartley (1749):

If there be a precipice, a cataract, a mountain of snow etc. in one part of the scene, the nascent ideas of fear and horror magnify and enliven all the other ideas, and by degrees pass into pleasures, by suggesting the security from pain.

The Awe-inspiring prospect shows us our modest station within the grandeur of Nature; it threatens us and provokes our adrenaline, and in doing so, it enlivens us too.



While over-analysis can ruin any vista, mindful reflection on the scene can deepen the experience and sear it more deeply into the memory. I carry these thoughts with me into the second year of my Munro journey, which is to present a few unexpected challenges...



Monarch of the Glen



Chapter 11: Ben Starav as it looks down on Loch Etive



Chapter 12: Monument at Glenfinnan to Bonnie Prince Charlie

Main Index

A

a' Bhraoin, Loch 73, 104
 an Daimh, Loch 60
 an Dubh-Lochain, Loch 217
 an Nid, Loch 76-8
 Aberdeen 51, 53, 58, 94, 135
 Acadian 80
 Ailsa Craig 95
 Alltbeithe 168
 Alps 22, 25, 29, 109, 129, 130, 133,
 186
 Alsh, Loch 38
 Aonach Eagach 103, 146, 148, 149
 Arcadian 15
 Archean 107
 Ardvreck 103
 Argyll 113
 Arkaig, Loch 9, 166
 Armorica 58
 Arrochar 25, 26
 Assynt 103
 Assynt, Loch 103
 Atholl 133, 173-6
 Avalonia 58
 Aviemore 69, 89, 133-4, 143, 174
 Awe, Loch 32, 33-5, 105

B

Ballachulish 111
 Ballantrae 79
 Balmoral 90
 Balsporran 133
 Baltica 58
 basalt 95
 Basho, Matsuo 9
 Beauly 47
 beauty 13, 19-22, 154
 Ben More Coigach 107
 Ben Nevis 15-17, 59, 64, 79, 87, 93-4,
 117, 145, 152-6, 186, 196, 216
 bivvy 166, 167
 Boddindeaun 195
 Bonnie Dundee – John Graham, 7th Laird
 of Claverhouse, 1st Viscount Dundee
 174
 Bonnie Prince Charlie – Prince Charles
 Edward Stuart 35, 101, 124, 164,
 198-9

boots, weight of 161, 170
 Braemar 79, 89, 92, 136, 193, 196, 198
 Breadalbane 61
 Bridge of Orchy 97, 146, 191
 Bruceton 47
 Buachaille 113
 Burns, Robert 209
 Bute, Kyles of 26
 Byron, George Gordon Noel, 6th Baron
 83

C

Cairngorms 5, 7, 9, 69, 79, 83, 89-94,
 115, 117, 128, 133-7, 161, 174, 193-8
 Caledonian Forest esp 128, 183, 196, 219
 Caledonian Mountains 7, 19, esp 58-9,
 78, 95
 Carlyle, Thomas 54
 Carron, Loch 187
 celtic 13, 70, 87, 101, 194, 195
 Clachlet Traverse 146
 climbing 11, 29-31, 114, 215-6
 Cluanie, Loch 189, 199
 CMD arête 152
 Cobbler, The 26, 27
 Coir' a' Ghrunnda, Loch 213
 Coire Lagan 42
 Corbetts 126, 186, 188
 Coruisk, Loch 94, 212, 214
 Coulags 7
 Craig 187
 Crianlarich 7, 55, 56, 83, 220
 cuillin 37, 42-4, 59, 95, 212-5
 Culloden 47, 164, 198
 Culra Bothy 45, 176-8

D

Dal Riata, Kingdom of 46
 Dee, Linn of 193, 197
 Derry Lodge 194, 196
 Donalds 186
 Drumfollow, Shank of 89
 drumlin 116
 Drumochter, Pass of 7, 133, 173, 176
 Dubh, Loch 105
 Duich, Loch 88
 Dundonnell 74-8

E

eagle 10, 33, 75, 141–2, 151–2
 Earn, Loch 25, 46, 53
 Earth, weighing the: esp 65–7
 Edinburgh 115
 Eigg, Isle of 166, 214
 Eilean Donan Castle 199
 Einich, Loch 137
 Eriboll, Loch 102
 Ericht, Loch 176, 179
 erratic 116, 129
 esker 116
 Etchachan, Loch 197
 Etive, Loch 33, 142
 Everest 10, 29, 163, 167–70
 Ewch House B&B, Crianlarich 191, 219

F

fairy 49, 58, 63, 75, 194, 196
 Fallon, Steven 30, 168, 213
 famine wall 98–9, 166
 Fannich, Loch 74, 127
 Fannichs 7, 70, 73
 Faroe Islands, The 95, 102
 fauna, Munro: esp 127–131
 Fearna, Loch 210
 Fersit 140, 150–1
 Fionn, Loch 105
 Firth of Lorn 33
 Fisherfield Forest 7, 69, 73–8, 97, 103–4,
 107, 121
 Fishnish 190–1
 Five Sisters of Kintail 199–201, 211
 flora, Munro: esp 141–3
 food chain 117, 141, 146
 Forcan Ridge 212
 Fyne, Loch 145–6

G

gabbro 95
 Gaelic, introduction to: 45–9, Appendix 2
 pages 240 et seq
 Gaels 9, 46, 53, 76, 90, 173
 Garry, Loch 210
 geology: see especially Chapters 4–8 and
 specific terms
 Gimingham, Charles 127
 glacier 7, 18, 33, 42, 55–9, 63, 74–6, 90,
 114–6, 135, 166
 Glasgow 25, 51, 84, 182
 Glen Affric 161, 168, 182–5, 189
 Glen Allt Mor 194
 Glen Brittle 42, 44

Glen Clova 89
 Glencoe 7, 51, 59, 79, 93, 94, 103,
 109–117, 138, 145–9, 152, 155, 191,
 222
 Glen Coe 149
 Glen Derry 194
 Glen Dessary 163, 164–6
 Glen Dochart 86
 Glen Doll 89
 Glen Etive 33, 79, 113, 148–151
 Glen Feshie 137
 Glenfinnan 163–5
 Glen Lochay 84–7
 Glen Lui 194
 Glen Lyon 60, 79, 84–5
 Glenmore Lodge 134, 136
 Glen Nevis 38, 154
 Glen Shiel 38, 161, 182, 189, 193,
 198–200, 209–211
 Glen Strathfarrar 182
 Glen Tilt 174
 Glen Torridon 121
 Glenure 111
 gneiss 103, 106–7, 166
 Grahams 138, 186
 Grampian 79, 173
 granite 94, 95, 106, 115, 130, 133, 141,
 149, 150, 174
 grass-hold 25–6, 54
 Grey Corries 145, 155
 Grylls, Bear 63

H

Harris, Isle of 72, 95, 105–6
 Hebrides, The 72, 80, 97, 102, 106–7,
 214–5
 Hewitt, Dave 30
 Hewitts 186
 Highland Boundary Fault 51, 53, 58–9,
 79, 83, 107
 Highland Clearances 7, 35, 47, 100, esp
 100–2
 Highland Cross 185, 211
 history of Scotland, scenic: Appendix 3 –
 page 244 et seq
 Holmes, Oliver Wendell, Sr. 133
 Hope, Loch 102
 Horns of Alligin 124, 125
 Hourn, Loch 38, 166, 218
 Hutton, Charles 66
 Hutton, James 21, 174
 hydro-electric schemes 25, 32, 187

I

Iceland 102
 Industrial Revolution 21, 101
 Inveroran 146

J

Jacobite 101, 164, 174, 198–9
 Juvenal – Decimus Iunius Iuvenalis 109

K

kame 116
 kettle 63, 116
 Kilchurn Castle 34
 Killin 64
 Kingshouse Hotel 112, 147, 155
 Kingussie 69
 Kinlochleven 153
 Kintyre 80
 Knoydart 7, 88, 164–7, 210, 214, 216,
 218

L

Laggan, Loch 139, 165
 Lairig Ghru 117, 135
 landscape, appreciation of: esp 20–3
 Lao Tzu 13
 Laurentia 58–9, 106
 Lawers 9, 60–3, 83, 101, 117
 Leven, Loch 112, 149, 153
 Lewisian 103, 106–7, 166
 Lewis, Isle of 72, 106, 124
 Liathach 117, 121–4, 153
 Linnhe, Loch 112, 149
 List, The (Sir Hugh's list or Tables of
 Munros) 13, 30, 205–6
 Lochalsh, Kyle of 38, 189
 Lochnagar, Loch 7, 51, 83, 90–3, 133
 Lochy, Loch 154
 Lomond, Loch 25, 28, 31, 53, 57–8, 114
 Lordship of the Isles 47
 Lukla 163

M

Macfarlane, Robert 22
 magma 42, 79, 93, 95, 102, 174
 Mamlorn 7, 83
 Mamores 7, 145, 152, 154
 Maree, Loch 97, 107, 115, 123
 Marilyns 138, 166
 Maskelyne, Rev. Dr Nevil 66
 Mason, Charles 65
 Mason-Dixon Line 65
 Maxwell, Gavin 38, 213
 McNeish, Cameron 25, 61, 87, 216

metamorphic 127, 150, 164–5
 Minetti, Prof. AE 181, 202
 Moine Thrust Zone 69, 76, 78, 80
 Monar, Loch 168, 188
 Montane Heath Zone 129
 Montane Scrub Zone 128–9
 Mountaincraft and Leadership 114
 Mountain Rescue 11, 35, 40, 41, 156–9
 Morar, Loch 198
 Morlich, Loch 133
 Muckle Spate 193–4
 Muick, Loch 90, 91
 muirburn 127, 129, 142, 176
 Muir, John 8, 121, 186, 216, 220
 Mull, Isle of 30, 33, 80, 95, 111, 173,
 185, 189, 190
 Mullardoch, Loch 168
 Munros, index to: Appendix 1 – page 229
 et seq
 Munro, Sir Hugh 7, 9, 13, esp 29–30,
 205

N

National Nature Reserve (NNR) 60, 130,
 139
 Nepal 202
 Neptunism 174
 Ness, Loch 58, 107, 185, 210
 Nevis, Loch 166, 218
 Normans 47
 Norse 46–7, 217
 nunatak 74, 115

O

Ondaatje, Michael 77
 Ossian, Loch 45, 151, 173, 176–180

P

Pap of Glencoe 149
 peaks, highest in Britain 11
 periglaciation 116
 Perth 65, 89, 92
 Pictish 46
 Picts 46
 Pitlochry 46
 plate tectonics, esp 58–9 and 78–80, 60,
 93, 95, 106–7
 Plutonism 174
 Polldubh 19
 Pre-Cambrian 58
 pre-glacial 115
 pro-talus 115

Q

quartzite 18, 59, 70, 77, 90, 106, 125–7,
155–6
Quoich, Loch 166, 200, 209–11

R

Rannoch, Loch 63–4, 193
Ring of Steall 7, 15, esp 16–9, 25, 59,
115, 117, 152, 155
Robertson, Rev AE 30
roches moutonnée 42, 115
Rum, Isle of 166, 190, 214

S

safety 11, 41, 88, esp 156–9
sandstone 106–7, 117, 123–6
Scandian 80
Scandinavia 78, 80, 114
Scavaig, Loch 94
Schama, Simon 20
Schiehallion 63, 75, 79, 194, 216
Schiehallion Experiment 7, 65–7
Shiel, Loch 164
schist 60, 106–7
Scotii 46
Scott, Sir Walter 53
sedimentary 174
Sgurr na Stri 214
Skye, Isle of 7, 9, 13, 37–45 passim, 47,
59, 93–5, 106, 115, 182, 199, 209,
212–8
Sligachan Inn 41–4
Sloy, Loch 26
solifluction 130
Sound of Sleat 38
South Glen Shiel Ridge 88, 189, 199
stadial 114
Stevenson, Robert Louis 69
Strathcarron 186–9
Strontium 49, 112
Sublime, The 22
Suilven 107

T

Tay, Loch 9, 58–60, 64, 79
terrane (geological plate) 79, 80, 106–7
Theroux, Paul 45, 200
Thoreau, Henry David 37
Tibet 153
Torridon, Loch 121, 123
Treig, Loch 140, 150–1
trimline 115
triple rainbow 178

Tuath, Loch 99
Tyndrum 219

U

Ullapool 69, 71, 98

V

Victoria, Queen 90–1, 195
Vikings 46–7
Volcanic Explosivity Index 94
Vulcanism, Scottish: esp 93–5

W

Wainwrights 186
walking, techniques of: esp 87–9 and
169–170
waterfall 15–7, 42, 122, 140, 145, 152,
242
Wester Ross 115
wu wei esp 160–1 and 201–3, 163–4,
180, 196–7, 201, 205