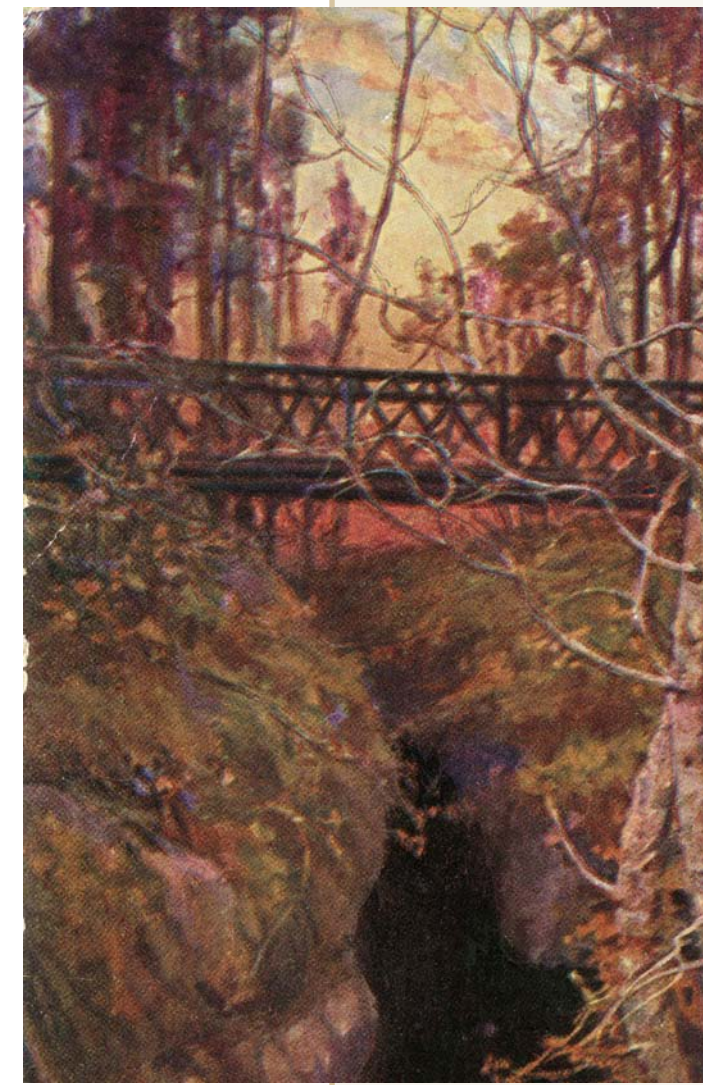


# Black Rock Gorge *Creag an Uillt Ghrandais*



This spectacular feature was formed as Scotland's ice age (*linn-eighe*) ended some 10,000 years ago and melting glaciers moved down glens such as Glen Glass. The land rose as the weight of the ice was removed and the water exploited weaknesses in the surrounding rock - to result in this



In July 1762 **Bishop Forbes** was excited by: 'one of the greatest Wonders of Nature I had ever seen or read of, which is the Water of Aultgrad, i.e. the Ugly Burn; so called, it is thought, from the Blackness of its Current and the Roughness of its Rocks; for it rushes rapidly, for a mile, between two Ridges of perpendicular Rocks ...'

## Giant Leaps

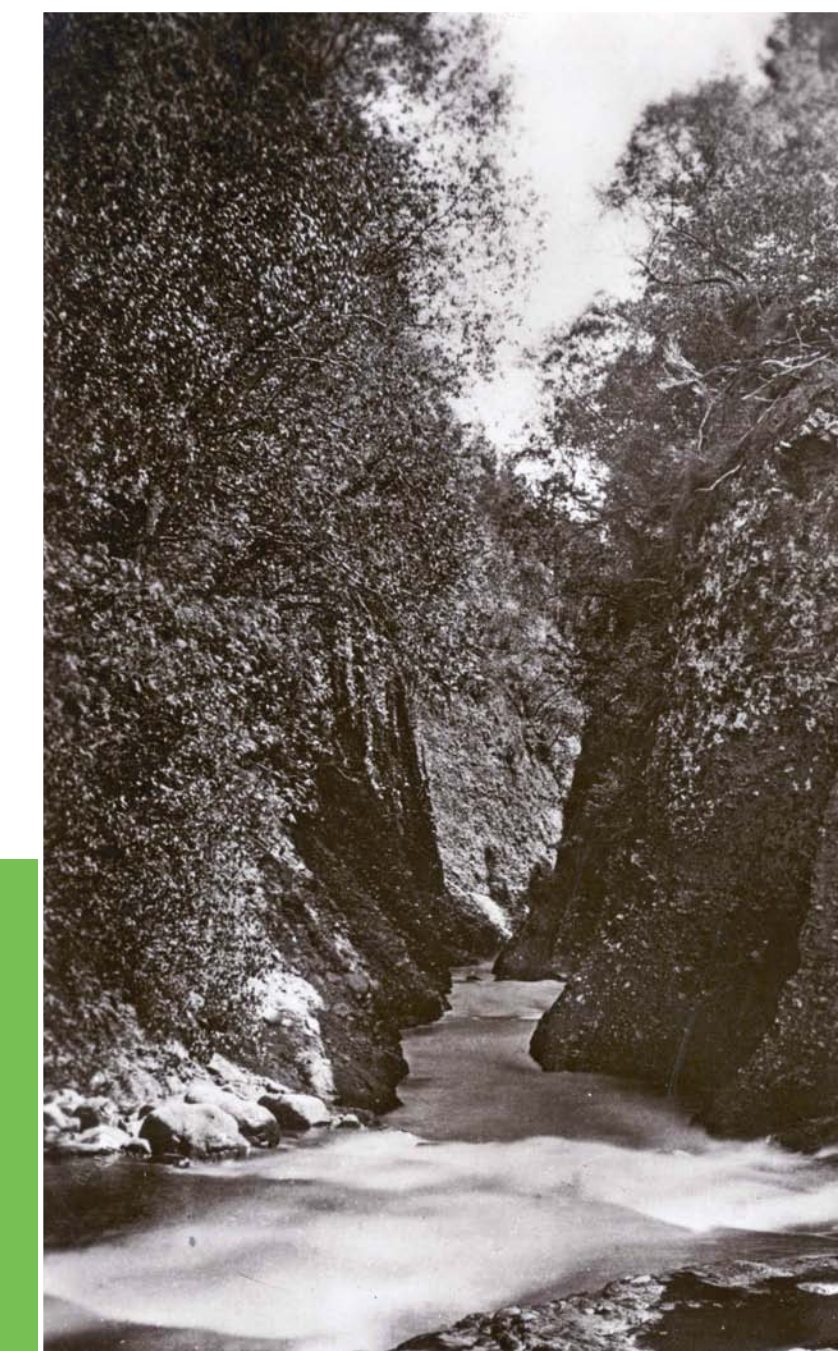
In the eighteenth century a smuggler (*cuiltear*), chased by excise men, is supposed to have leapt the gorge. In the late nineteenth century David 'Grove' MacDonald of Evanton (pictured), a noted athlete and cattle dealer, leapt across the gorge for a wager of a sovereign.



Mack' (2006) also uses the Black Rock gorge as the inspiration for 'Black Jaws' – the scene of the narrow escape of Jasper the dog.



In 2013 the 3.5 MW Black Rock Hydro Scheme opened. This takes water (*uisge*) from the River Glass 1km upstream from the gorge and returns it to the Turbine House just below the gorge on the north bank. The water is piped across the river via a new pipe bridge at the western tip of Evanton Wood.



gorge which is up to 40 m deep, as little as 5 m wide and 1.5 km long.



**CAUTION!**  
For your own safety please stay on the paths and bridges



In the 1790s **Rev Harry Robertson** wrote of 'The fine groves of pines which majestically climb the sides of a beautiful eminence that rises immediately from the brink of the chasm... all these objects cannot be contemplated without exciting emotions of wonder and admiration in the mind of the beholder'.

*Behind you is the community owned wood: From here you have a choice of paths through and round the wood – and plenty of places to explore.*

## The Lady of Balconie

Hugh Miller relates the popular legend of the mysterious lady of the nearby Balconie Castle who was lured into the gorge by a 'dark-looking man, in green' - her maidservant narrowly escaping the same fate. The lady threw the household keys as she fell and they struck a huge granite boulder – leaving an impression which, it is said, can still be seen today. A local fisherman reputedly came across the lady some years later in a great cave (*uaimh*) guarded by two dogs, but she has not been seen since!

