



[Mol nam Bràithrean - The Brothers' Beach]

This small pebbly beach marks the point at which the common grazing boundaries of Calbost and Marvig meet on the shoreline north of Calbost. It got its place name from the fact that there is a marked burial place of the remains of two brothers who were cast upon the beach by the sea, just above the pebbly beach. That drowning incident happened in the distant past, and there is no local tradition surviving to indicate who the brothers were or when their drowning took place.

It is of interest however that a copy of a map, which is thought to date about 1760, identifies this feature of the landscape as 'Mol na Bràithrean', indicating that those brothers were drowned before that date. It seems however that it was known that they were brothers.

They are buried side by side, and two ordinary stones at each end of their resting place mark their graves. We understand that there was in the past a tradition of burying human remains at, or near, the place where they were found. Certainly there are isolated graves to be seen in various places in Lochs.

Another interesting feature of the landscape in the area of 'Mol na Bràithrean' is the evidence of widespread cultivation in the form of old 'lazybeds' (feannagan). Could it be that a community of sea rovers settled here sometime in the distant past, and lived off the land and the sea.

The idea of a thriving settlement is confirmed by the fact that there was also a grain water mill in the area, on the stream which issues from 'Loch na Buala Dubha', a little to the west of the pebbly beach, on higher ground, and flows into the sea at the pebbly beach. Traces of the ruins of the water mill may still be seen, and one of the round grinding stones is still in the area.

Considering that prehistoric man is said to have reached Scotland about 5,000 years ago or more, it is difficult at this stage to date the settlement at 'Mol na Bràithrean'. It is however significant that there was a meal water mill at 'Mol na Bràithrean', near to a similar mill on the stream within Calbost village. Probably one of them predates the other, or could it be that the density of the population justified two water mills so close to each other?

Modern records show the peak population of 200 people in Calbost at the beginning of the 20th century in 1901, and the last indigenous resident man died in 1997. The water mill at Calbost ceased to produce in 1902 when the miller, Kenneth Nicolson, moved to Stornoway.

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