



The Loss of Three Fishermen in Loch Odhairn (1918)

On a winter's day in 1918, a crew of three men from Gravir set a few nets in Loch Odhairn, Gravir on fixed anchors, as was customary in the winter when the herring very often came into the sheltered sea lochs.

Normally the men went out early the following morning to try the nets. On this occasion there was a good catch of herring in the nets, and it was not easy to hurry even although they were aware that the wind was rising, and all the other boats went off to shelter in Gravir anchorage.

The three men were:

Kenneth Macphail	born 1855	Coinneach Goirid	19 Outend Gravir - Skipper
Robert Macmillan	born 1857	Rob Mhurchaidh Bhàrd	3 Gravir
Allan Macaskill	born 1867	Allan Beag Allan	Married to Bess Macmillan of 3 Gravir

The men were reluctant to leave the nets, and they did not realise that they were overloading the boat in the prevailing weather conditions. Suddenly a strong squall of wind caught the overloaded boat and it foundered.

When the boat was found later on, in the same place, it was full of herring and nets. Two of the bodies were recovered with the boat. The third body that of Kenneth Macphail was found at Branahuie near Stornoway several weeks later.

It was felt that he may have tried to swim with an oar and was blown out to sea.

The drowning accident left three widows and about thirteen children.

[ends]

AN ARCHIVE RECORD FROM THE ANGUS MACLEOD ARCHIVE www.angusmacleodarchive.org.uk

Author: Angus Macleod

Date:

Original document title: The Loss of Three Fishermen in Loch Odhairn

Location in physical archive: Series K, File 4, Section 90

NRAS reference: NRAS 4336/1/9/4

© Angus Macleod Archive