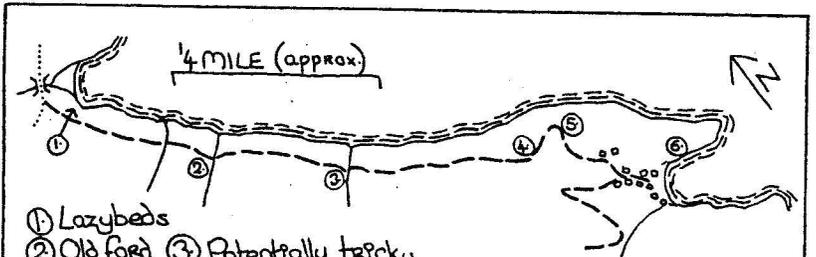
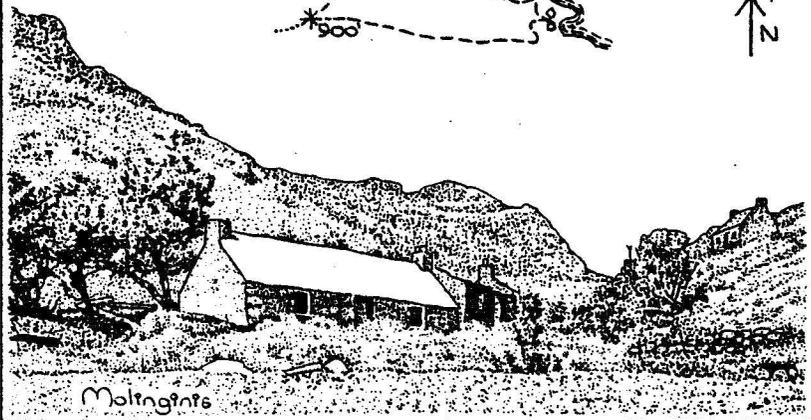
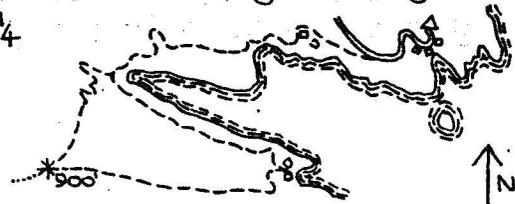
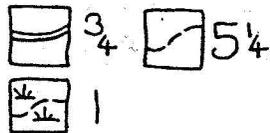


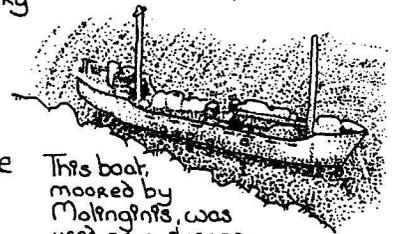
MOLINGINIS

7 miles

Looking across Loch Trollamarec from the north, you will be aware of a small foothill, snug into the lower slopes of Beinn a' Chadais, where the vegetation is distinctly greener than the surrounding hillsides, yet though Reifrigeadal and a large portion of the Tairbeart Path remain within one mile of that green hill, there is nothing to suggest to the traveller that there might be even much of a valley behind it, let alone the remains of some 18 buildings that were once the homes of a little community. In recent times one cottage has been restored by the owner of the croft and work on a second (pictured below) is under way, but the village has otherwise been deserted only since the mid 1960's. Molinginis is such a peaceful, beautiful, haunting place and I suspect that there are few people, who have found that place, who are indifferent to it, or who don't look across Loch Trollamarec on future days without thinking about the hidden village behind the green hill.



- ① Lazybeds
- ② Old ford
- ③ Potentially tricky stream crossing
- ④ Fence
- ⑤ Fine vantage point
- ⑥ Cave



This boat, moored by Molinginis, was used as a storage platform for the salmon cages, but during the winter of 1996/97 a storm pulled it down to the floor of the loch, where it remains.

• Leaving the hostel, follow the road to the point where it meets the Tairbeart Path, then walk along that path until you reach the footbridge below the zig-zags in Glen Trollamarec

THE SHEEP TRACK: Just beyond the bridge, a less distinct track, known as the Sheep Track veers off to the left, climbing gradually but remaining parallel to the shore. It must be noted that this path is very rough nowadays, and is impassable if there has been much rain and the streams are swollen - if this is the case, avoid the Sheep Track entirely and instead use the higher, better preserved path both ways.

• As the Sheep Track leaves the Tairbeart Path it passes through an area of derelict lazybeds (①), shortly after which the first and easiest stream crossing is made. At the second stream the remains of a ford can be used, maybe it's creation was intended to provide the dual purpose of a crossing point and a pool which still makes a good place to cool off on a hot day.

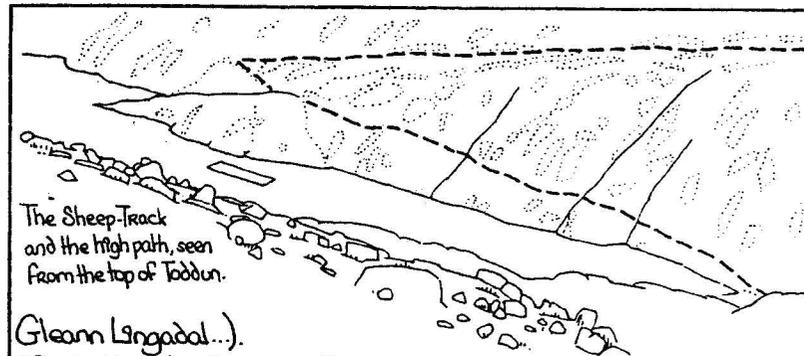
• By this point, the Sheep Track will be living up to its name, wandering on through the heather perched on an increasingly steep slope and getting quite narrow in places. You might be happily walking along one moment and your attention be distracted by the lovely scenery across Loch Trollamaric and when you look back the path is nowhere to be seen, and so you are forced to spend a few minutes searching to see where it might have gone... and then there it is, unmistakable and five feet wide.

• If you had any trouble crossing the second stream, you won't relish the prospect of the third, which is the most difficult. The slab of rock that serves as a ford is on an angle and there will usually be some water flowing over it, moistening the algal growth that dwells contentedly there. So, it's slippery there, and the sheep track (capital letters don't seem appropriate at this spot) on either side is narrow and crumbly, so take care over it.

• Once beyond all the streams the path again gets a little hazy before doubling as a watercourse and sliding down into a boggy area, then it climbs up to a rocky outcrop and a little further on you will behold the fence that marks the end of the brown and the beginning of the green lands (to the viewer from the far side of Loch Trollamaric - depending on the season). The fence has barbed wire running along the top, but one section has been removed where the path meets it.

• Before heading down to Malinginis, take a look around from the top of the hillock (5) just beyond the fence, for a view taking in most of the walk so far. Then go down the hill, through the lazybeds and into the little village.

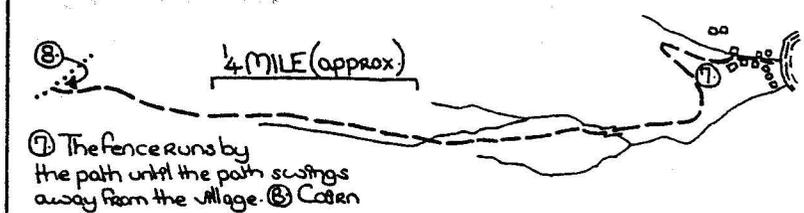
• Malinginis means the beach by the heathery headland, ling (heather) appears in a few other local placenames (Linginis;



The Sheep-Track and the high path, seen from the top of Toddun.

Gleann Lingadal...).

Most of the buildings in the village are blackhouses, a very different concept in house construction than what is normal today, it evolved through the accumulated knowledge of generations, each building being different in subtle ways depending on its location in the land. Ideals shifted and in a few short decades the blackhouse was largely left to decay back into the land.



(1) The fence runs by the path until the path swings away from the village. (5) Cairn

• The high path, which climbs practically painlessly from sea-level to 900' (compared to the zig-zag) is easy to follow, it still being in fairly good condition. The path switch-backs out of Malinginis before taking a virtually direct route up the hillside until it joins the Tairbeart path between Trollamul and Beinn Tharsuirn, and a small cairn marks the spot. All the way up there are great views, swinging round from Toddun to the distant mainland mountains. Turn right at the cairn and follow the Tairbeart path back to Reingeadal.