

Seanchas na Farraigeadh

Dá mbéadh bean ag faire (dúil le clann) bhéadh siad ag faire an lán mar an páiste a bhéarfaí leis an t-ionrú tuile, bhí séan is ádh leis. Sin nuair thigeann na sliogéisc aníos as an tráigh. Logaí, corraí, ‘borradh’ a dtugadh siad ar an lán sin. Bhí siad ag fáil toradh agus borradh nuair a bhíonn an rú ag tíocht isteach, bíonn na héisc ag dúil lena mbeatha. Bhéadh chuile shórt sástaí ansin mar bhíof a sáith ag chuile rud. Torradh a bhí ar an bpáiste a bhéarfaí leis an t-ionrú tuile. Bhéadh a sháith ag an bpáiste ar feadh a shaol dá bharr.

An té a bhéarfaí leis an t-ionrú trámh, ní bhéadh an t-ádh acu leis. Ní raibh rath nó séan ag baint leis. Bánú (tugthar chuile rud amach leis), fán (ag fánaíocht, ní thiocfaidh sé ar ais) agus éag (an té a chaillí leis an t-ionrú trámh). Nuair a bhíodh siad ag faire an duine ar leabaidh an bháis, ‘ag saothrú bháis’ mar a déarfá, bhreathnaíodh duine amach le go bhfeicfeadh sé an raibh an fharraige amuigh ar fad nó an raibh sí ar leath-ionrú. Nuair a thoiseodh sé ag trámh d’abraíodh siad go raibh an té ag imeacht amach leis an t-ionrú. ‘Mairfidh sé an leathionrú ar aon nós’, b’shin a bhí le rá go dtiocfadh leis a mhaireachtáil ceann scathamh eile go dtí go mbéadh an lán ann.

Nuair a bhíof aimsir rabharta ann bhíof an t-ionrú níos faide. Níl ach bhféidir leath an rabharta agat nuair a bhíonn meá-rabharta ann; ‘ní an lán ag goil amach fhad is a bhí sé roimhe’ déarfadh siad. Bhí an t-ionrú íseal. Mall-uair ní théann amach ró-fhada, níl aon rabharta. Toisíonn an rabharta ‘ag baint’ (nuair a gcaithfidh sé líonadh amach). Sin rabharta an Earraigh.

Ansin bhí ‘Rabharta Mór na Féile Pádraig’. Tráigheann an charraig leis an uair ansin agus bíonn lá níos faide acu ag an gcladach le baint feamainní. Nuair a thigeann rabharta mór na n-éan (i dtoiseach an Aibreáin) sin an uair thoisíonn na héanachaí cladaigh ag déanamh neide. Beidh siad ag faire go bhfeice siad cén fad nó airde a dhéanfas an rabharta le go mbeidh a fhios acu cén áit a dhéanfas siad a gcuid neadrachaí. Sin iad na faoleáin agus an crupaigh (crotalch) agus na geabhróig. Bíonn siad ag dearcadh ar mharc an láin (an áit a fhágann an lán mara). Dá ndéanfaí an nead ró-fhada isteach ó mharc an láin ní bhéadh aon truíst ag an éan as an uair, aimsir. Bheadh a fhios ag an éan go nach mbéadh sé sách sábháilti agus go mbáifí a gcuid neadrachaí.

Bhíodh sinní ag amharc ar chúrsaí na farraigeadh níos cruinne fad ó shin. Bhí oiread daoine ina gcónaí thimpeall an gcósta, ach níl ach corrdhuine anois mar shampla, tá baint aige sin leis. Tá bánú millteanach déantaí den gcósta thart anseobh. Níl na daoine cois cladaigh mar a bhíthí. Thugadh daoine pisleogaí ar na nósannaí a bhí ag na daoine fadó ach b'sheobh é an traidisiún. Bhí a nós féin ag chuile áit, muintir Dhuibhoileáin is Ghlais is mar sin de.

An dream a bhí amuigh ar an bhfarraige b'éigean dóbhtha fanacht go mall san oíche, agus bhíof paidireachaí acu chun iad fhéin a chosaint. Bhíof asarlaíocht ag baint leis na rónaí chomh maith. D'airigh mé iad a ráit gur cér bith áit go raibh báitheadh le déanamh gur bhfacaidh siad rón ag goil suas is anuas. Bhí mí-ádh ag baint leobhtha. Cuir i gcás an oíche gur tharlaigh báitheadh Inis Géidh agus bhí fear seachtain roimhe sin thíos ag an gcarraig lena ghunna agus choinic sé rón agus thoisigh an rón ag caoineadh agus níor loisc sé an rón. Choinic sé an rón céanna agus iad amuigh ag iascaireacht oíche an báitheadh. Bhí an feochán toisithe, chuir an rón a chloigeann isteach in aice leobhtha agus d'aithin mo dhuine gurb é an rón céanna é. Chuir sé fógradh ar na fearaibh eile gur droch-ádh a bhí ann agus thograidh siad chun tíocht i dtír le faitíos, agus bhí an rón istigh rompu ag an gcladach. Bhíothar ag leagan amach gur tharrtháil an rón sin iad mar gheall nár loisc mo dhuine é.

Ansin, bhíof na curraigh sídh ann. Bhí fear amháin ann fadó ina sheasamh thíos ag an 'dock' ag faire agus d'airigh sé currach taobh amuigh le triúir ann. Thainig an currach anoir agus cúigear fear air, d'fhan sé ag an gcéibh le go bhfeicfeadh sé cén áit go dtáinig sé isteach ach níor thainig, d'imigh an currach as amharc agus na triúir fir ann agus b'shin maidin gur tharlaigh an báiteadh i 1923.

Traditions of the Sea

If a woman was expecting a child, the people would look out at the tide for the child that was born with the high tide would have fortune and luck. That's the time when the shellfish come up from the beach. Eels and the like would appear and that tide would be known as the borradh or 'prosperous' tide. They were getting fortune and fruits when the tide was coming in it was said and the fish would be waiting for their feed. Everything would be happy then for each would

have their fill. That child would be fruitful and never want for anything the rest of its life.

Then the one who was born with the ebbing tide, they would have no luck. There was no fortune to be had by them. 'Banishment' and 'wandering' and 'demise' was their fate. When they used to watch someone who was near their last breath, 'earning their death' as such, they would look out at the tide to see if it was out or at half-tide. When it started to ebb they would say that the person would go with the tide. 'He'll survive another half-tide' would be a common turn of phrase which meant that the person might last another while at least.

When it was the time of the Spring tide then, the tide would be longer. The meá-rabharta then would be half of the Spring tide; 'the tide isn't going out as far as it was' they would say. It would be low.

Then you had the Spring tide of St Patrick's Day. The rocks become exposed at this time and there is a longer period to harvest seaweed at the shoreline. With the big Spring tide of the birds comes at the start of April then the birds start to nest. The birds watch to see what height the tide is coming in so that they can safely make their nest. Those are the seagulls, the curlews and the terns. They look for the tide mark (where the tide has risen to previously). If they nest too low down then the nest will be drowned with the weather.

We used to pay attention to the affairs of the sea much more closely long ago. There used to be throngs of people living round the coast before but now there are only a handful, that has something to do with it. There has been a terrible abandonment of the land around here. The coastal people aren't as they once were. People would call the habits who lived here long ago 'superstitious' but that was the tradition they grew up with. Every place had their own tradition, the people in Glosh and in Divillaun and so on.

Those who were out at sea would be away in the dark of night and they would have prayers they would say to protect them. People were apprehensive about

the seals especially as it was believed that they had a magical quality. I heard it said that wherever a drowning was to take place a seal would be seen bobbing up and down beforehand. They were seen as ominous creatures. Take for example the drowning of the men of Inishkea; there was one of that party of fishermen who the previous week had gone down to the shoreline to go shooting and as he was about to shoot a seal he heard it crying and he decided to spare its life. He saw the same seal when they were out fishing the night of the drowning. The gust had just begun and the seal reared its head beside the boat and the man recognised it as the same seal that he had spared the week previous. He told the other men that it was a warning of bad luck and they decided to turn back out of fear, and when they got to the shoreline the seal was there waiting for them. It was believed that the seal had saved that boat because of that man's clemency.

Then there were the fairy currachs. There was man stood at a place known as 'the dock' watching out at the sea when he heard a currach coming with three men aboard. He moved to the other side of the pier to see where they would come in but when he looked they had vanished. That was the morning of the drowning in 1923.