

is go bhfuil báid nua-aimseartha snáithíngloine beagnach coinnithe amach go hiomlán. Tá sé ar cheann de na ceantair is mó ina labhraítear Gaeilge, go háirithe i ndáil leis an téarmaíocht a bhaineann le báid a dhéanamh agus a úsáid, rud a chuireann le sainiúlacht chultúrtha an réigiúin.

Is iad na Báid Seoil agus na Curacha Rása le haghaidh áineasa, na Báid Locha le haghaidh slatiascaireachta, na Curacha GRP, Curacha Adhmaidh agus Báid Leathdheice le haghaidh iascaireachta báid cheannais na Gaillimhe. Maidir le báid eile, cé go bhfuil siad tábhachtach ó thaobh na hoidhreachta de, tá níos lú díobh ann agus tá roinnt díobh i mbaol. Maidir leis na báid sin, is í an fhadhb a bhaineann leo nach rabhtas in ann teacht ar úsáid dóibh i saol nua, saol a bhí ag athrú, mar a bhíothas in ann a dhéanamh i gcás na mBád Seoil agus i gcás na mBáirsí Canála, ar éirigh thar cionn leo, nó ní rabhtas in ann iad a chur in oiriúint do theicneolaíocht nó cúinsí nua mar a bhíothas i gcás na gcurach GRP, nó na gCurach Rása nó níor chlaochlaigh siad ina mbáid nua a d'fhreastail ar riachtanais na ndaoine mar a rinne an Churach Adhmaid céad bliain ó shin.

Léirítear an anailís ar líon agus dáileadh na mbád sa roinn BÁID GAN CHUNTAS agus sa roinn MAR A BHÍ, MAR ATÁ agus MAR A BHEIDH AMACH ANSEO, caitear súil ar fhorbairt na hoidhreachta, ar roinnt de na ceisteanna agus fadhbanna a thagann chun cinn agus ar mholtaí don todhchaí.

Agus tá an todhchaí ag breathnú go maith do bháid oidhreachta i gContae na Gaillimhe. Táthar ag súil, leis na scéalta ratha sa leabhar seo, go bhféadfaidh fir agus mná na Gaillimhe léargas cothrom a fháil ar na fadhbanna atá fós ann agus go spreagfar daoine chun leanúint leis an obair. Oslófar domhan nua glórmhar dóibh siúd a dhéanfaidh sin.



Taking off Stores – Aran Islands
S. Coleman RHA

Díluchtú Stóras – Árann
S. Coleman RHA

Chapter 2

Islands, Sea-shore, Lakes and Rivers
The Areas and their Boat Heritage

Oileáin, Cladach, Lochanna agus Aibhneacha
Na Ceantair agus a nOidhreacht Bád

Oileáin Árann

[Area 1]



Curachaí, Inis Meáin – Supports no longer in use

Curachaí, Inis Meáin – Frapaí gan úsáid anois

The grey tilted slabs of Aran turn their backs to the Atlantic in a series of majestic cliffs. On the gentler northern shores, facing Connemara, there are occasional sandy beaches and it is here that the curachs are found. The traditional *Curach Chanbháis* (canvas-skinned curach) – the craft indelibly associated in people's minds with Oileáin Árann – is in danger of disappearing. Its story is told here, but also the stories of the other significant boats associated with the islands, the Nobbies, Hookers and Trawlers.

The topography of Oileáin Árann⁵, with few natural harbours in the past, militated against the ownership of larger boats until the pier at Cill Éinne was completed by Nimmo in the 1820s. Cill Rónáin was developed as a fishing harbour from the 1850s, with major investment by the Congested Districts Board⁶ from the 1890s on. The CDB also set up a fishing and curing station, as well as a boatyard at which 9 boats were built, including 4 Nobbies. A total of 114 curachs was recorded in 1892. This was probably the first commercial fishery on Oileáin Árann but it was destined to last for only a short period⁷. By 1922 the CDB boats were repossessed because of a shortfall in repayments and a fisheries co-operative, which was set up in Cill Mhuirbhigh in 1915, was wound up in that year also. Following that, commercial fishing on the islands would appear to have reverted to being a part-time activity, combined with farming. Thus, the use of bigger boats was limited until the establishment of Bord Iascaigh Mhara in 1952.

⁵ See Reference 9

⁶ Referred to in text by the abbreviation CDB

⁷ See Reference 9



Curach Chanbháis rotting away, Inis Meáin

Curach Chanbháis ag meath, Inis Meáin

Oileáin Árann [Ceantar 1]

Tugann aillte maorga Árann, ar sraith de leaca glasa claonta iad, a n-aghaidh ar an Atlantach. Tá corrthrá ghainimh ar na cladaí séimhe atá ó thuaidh i dtreo Chonamara agus is ansin a thagtar ar na curacha. Tá an Churach Chanbháis thraidisiúnta (curach le clúdach canbháis) – an bád is mó a aithnítear le hOileáin Árann – i mbaoil imeacht i léig. Insítear a scéal anseo, chomh maith le scéal na mbád eile a bhaineann leis na hoileáin, na Naibithe, na Húicéirí agus na Trálaeir.

Mar gheall ar thopagrafaíocht Oileáin Árann⁵ agus mar gheall ar easpa cuanta nádúrtha, ní raibh mórán bád mór ann nó gur chuir Nimmo an chéibh i gCill Éinne i gcrích sna 1820dí. Rinneadh Cill Rónáin a fhorbairt mar chuan iascaireachta ó na 1850dí agus rinne Bord na gCeantar Cúng⁶ infheistíocht mhór ann ó na 1890dí ar aghaidh. Bhunaigh an BCC ionad iascaireachta agus leasaithe chomh maith le longchlós ina ndearnadh 9 mbád, 4 Naibí ina measc, agus 114 curach ab ea an comhaireamh iomlán ansin sa bhliain 1892. Is dócha gurbh é seo an chéad iascach tráchtála ar Oileáin Árann ach ní raibh sé le maireachtáil ach ar feadh tréimhse ghearr⁷. Bhí báid an BCC athshealbhaithe faoin mbliain 1922 mar gheall ar easnamh in aisíocaíochtaí agus rinneadh comharchumann iascaigh, a bunaíodh i gCill Mhuirbhígh i 1915 a fhoirceannadh an bhliain sin freisin. Bhí an chuma ar an scéal ina dhiaidh sin gur ghníomhaíocht pháirtaimseartha a bhí san iascaireacht thráchtála a rabhthas ina bun i gcomhar le feirmeoireacht. Dá bhrí sin, bhí úsáid na mbád mór teoranta go dtí gur bunaíodh Bord Iascaigh Mhara sa bhliain 1952.

⁵ Féach Tagairt 9

⁶ Tagraítear dó sa téacs leis an ngiorrúchán BCC

⁷ Féach Tagairt 9

The Congested Districts Board



Aran Curach (*Curach Chanbháis*)

Skin boats, with square transom; double gunwale; light skeleton with steamed oak ribs; deal laths; traditionally covered with tarred canvas; constructed upside down; 2-hand (16ft.), 3-hand (19ft.) and formerly, 4-hand (up to 23ft.). Now often skinned in GRP.

Curach Árann (*Curach Chanbháis*)

Báid seithe le transam cearnógach; gunail dhúbailte; conablaigh éadrom le fonsaí darach galaithe; liúrach déile; clúdaithe de ghnáth le canbhás agus tarra; déanta bun os cionn; curach dhá sheas (16 troithe), trí sheas (19 dtroithe) agus roimhe sin, ceithre sheas (suas le 23 troigh). Clúdaítear go minic anois le GRP.

The Congested Districts Board (CDB) was established in 1891. Its objective was to relieve poverty in the overpopulated or ‘congested’ districts of the west of Ireland. Its activities included land reform, improvements in infrastructure and housing and the establishment of craft industries. Livestock breeds and crop strains were also improved. It took over responsibility for fisheries from the Board of Works and set about a radical overhaul of the native fishing industry which was then dominated by small inshore craft. The CDB introduced larger, decked boats, powered by sail, such as the Scottish Zulu and the Manx Nobby, which had proved themselves in English and Scottish waters. Instructors in building and fishing methods were brought from Scotland to promote building in Irish boatyards and fishing by Irish fishermen – it is even said that some of the fishing terminology, in Scots Gaelic, persisted in use among Aran fishermen well into the 20th century. Additional Nobbies and Zulus were purchased from England and Scotland. In all, by 1909 a total of 189 new boats had been commissioned; 90 were built in Irish boatyards, including 30 boats plus two hookers in Co. Galway. The builders involved were Sim of Árainn (Inishmore), O'Donnell of Galway, Trayers of Leitir Mealláin, the Caseys and Clohertys of Maínis and Cloherty of Roundstone. Appendix 1 lists details of these boats and where they were built. For most of the boats built in Ireland it is noted: *‘In these cases the board incurred further expense by providing instruction in boat-building’*. This may help to explain the higher cost of Irish boats compared to those built in Scotland or the Isle of Man.

During the 30 years of its existence the CDB made an enormous contribution to improving the conditions of the communities for which it was responsible. The board was dissolved in 1923 and its staff was absorbed into the Irish Land Commission when its functions were assumed by the Department of Fisheries and Rural Industries.