

Todhar Ur

Aig àm a' chiad chogadh nuair a thàinig air na balaich falbh bha meall de thaighean ann anns nach robh fireannaich idir agus mar a bha, gu h-àiridh as a' bhaile seo, bha todhar doirbh fhaighinn timcheall Rudha Reibinis. Bha aon fhear a bha as a' bhaile agus dh'fhalbh a h-uile cuideachadh a bh'aige, ach fhuair e air dòigh air choreigin lorg air "a' chuana" (guano) agus chaidh an talamh a thionndadh. Bha iongnadh air daoine air dè bha a' dol a thighinn as, gun todhar air a dhol air. Chunnacas e a' dol a-mach agus tomad de chuinneig shalainn aige ann am poca air a dhruim agus cha robh e barrachd air uair na trì chairteal na h-uarach a-muigh air an talamh nuair a thill e dhachaidh agus an talamh aige air a thodharadh.

Am feasgar sin ann an taigh Ruairidh, taigh a' phuist, far am biodh muinntir a' bhaile a' ceilidh thionndaidh an còmhradh chun a' chuana. Thòisich am fear a chaidh a-mach leis a' chuana agus fear dha na bodaich a bha a-staigh a' bruidhinn air an eadar-dhealachadh eadar fodar a langadail a bha iad a' cuir air a' choirce agus na bha a' dol a thighinn as a' chuana. Ach bha "fear a' chuana" cho cumhachdach le dheasbad 's nach robh facal aig an fhear eile dha. 'S e crìochnachadh na naidheachd gun tuir am bodach a bhiodh a' cuir an langadal air an talamh, "uill, tha aon rud tha fhiosam," ars esan, "ach mise bhidh na mo mhart, b' fheàrr leamsa fodar a' langadail".

Nuair a thàinig am foghar, chunnaic na daoine a chuir todhar na bathcha agus todhar an t-sàile air an talamh, an coirce acasan 's am bàrr air abachadh aig àm nàdarrach gu leòr. Ach a nis, far an deachaidh an cuana bha e a' fas, ach bha e a' cumail cho gorm 's bha coltas nach robh foghar gu bhith idir ann agus chuir seo uallach air a' bhodach - gun tigeadh e fada dhen bhliadhna 's nach fhaigheadh e air a thiomachadh.

Ach mar a thachair fhuair e, agus sin toiseach a' chuana as a' bhaile seo. Nuair a chunnacas an obair a rinn am bodach le cho beag saothair, gun a bhith a' dol timcheall Rubha Reibinis, as aonais a fhluicheadh as a' chladach a' gearradh langadail 's gun a shàrachadh fhèin ga chur suas chun an talamh cha robh argamaid ann!

New fertiliser introduced

At the time of the 1st World War, when the boys had to enlist, there were many houses left without men which made it particularly hard in this village as it was very difficult to get loads of seaweed round Rudha Reibinis for using as fertiliser. There was one man in the village and all his helpers had gone away but he somehow got his hands on guano. He turned his land and many people wondered what it was going to produce without having been manured. He was seen going out with what looked like a large bucket of salt in a bag on his back and after spending no more than an hour on his land he was back home having fertilised it.

That evening, at the gathering in Roderick the postman's house, the talk turned to the guano. The man who had used it for the first time and another old man who favoured seaweed for his oats started discussing the merits of both. The man who had introduced the guano was so articulate in his argument that he left the other fellow speechless. It ended, however, with the one who favoured seaweed on his land saying, "Well, if I was a cow I'd prefer fodder grown from langadal!"

When harvest time came the people who had used fertiliser from the byre and from the sea saw their oats and potatoes ripen at the usual time. The man who used guano was concerned as his crop was still green and hadn't ripened so he was worried that it would be too late to get it dry. However, it did ripen, he got it dried and that was the start of using guano in the village. Once the others saw how little work was involved, in comparison with hauling manure or getting wet collecting seaweed, they preferred the manufactured fertiliser.