

Litir do Luchd-Ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

*A special programme, in the form of a “letter”, written and compiled by Roddy Maclean, and specifically aimed at Gaelic learners who already have some knowledge of the language. A short vocabulary and comments on points of grammar and figures of speech are included with the text. If you have comments, Roddy can be contacted by e-mail at roddy.maclean@bbc.co.uk **

An t-seachdain sa chaidh, anns na puingean-gràmair, dh’iarr mi oirbh eadar-theangachadh a dhèanamh, bho Bheurla gu Gàidhlig, air dà ainm-àite - *the sea-narrows of the small anchorage* agus *the point of the big lump-shaped hill*. Ciamar a chaidh dhuibh? An do rinn sibh an gnothach?

The sea-narrows of the small anchorage an toiseach – Caolas na h-Acarsaid Bige, Caolas na h-Acarsaid Bige. Agus – *the point of the big lump-shaped hill*? Dè mu dheidhinn - Rubha a’ Mhill Mhòir? Rubha a’ Mhill Mhòir.

Thug sinn sùil air ainm-àite no dhà anns an Litir mu dheireadh bho CD-ROM ùr air a bheil cruinneachadh de dh’ainmean à sgìre na Còigich ann an Siorrachd Rois. Bha sinn an t-seachdain sa chaidh anns na h-Eileanan Samhraidh. An turas seo bu mhath leam coimhead air àite no dhà air tìr-mòr agus na ghabhas ionnsachadh bhuapa mu ghràmar na Gàidhlig.

Uill, tha an CD-ROM fosgailte an-dràsta agus tha mi a’ coimhead air àite air a bheil *Ceum nan Each*. Ceum nan Each. Tha mi an dòchas gu bheil sibh a’ tuigsinn gu bheil *nan each* a’ ciallachadh *of the horses*. Nuair a tha ainmear mar *each* ag atharrachadh gu *eich* anns an tuiseal ainmneach iolra, no *nominative plural*, - ’s e sin le caolachadh, an àite le bhith a’ cur –*an aig* an deireadh, tha sin a’ ciallachadh dà rud cudthromach a thaobh gràmar. Anns a’ chiad dol a-mach, bidh buadhair a thèid leis air a shèimheachadh. Canaidh sinn *eich mhòra* is *eich bheaga*.

Agus ’s e an dàrna riaghailt chudthromach gu bheil cruth an fhacail anns an tuiseal ghinideach iolra co-ionann ri chruth anns an tuiseal ainmneach shingilte. Mar sin, airson *the horses*, canaidh sinn “na h-eich”, ach airson *of the horses*, canaidh sinn “nan each”. Ceum nan Each – *the Path of the Horses*.

Beagan gu deas air sin tha *Creag nam Broc*. Dè tha sin a’ ciallachadh? *Creag nam Broc*. Tha *broc* a’ ciallachadh *badger*. Airson a dhèanamh iolra, bidh sinn ga chaolachadh – gu *bruic*. Tha *na bruic* a’ ciallachadh *the badgers*. Mar sin, tha “nam broc” a’ ciallachadh *of the badgers*. *Creag nam Broc* – *the Rock of the Badgers*. Chan eil fhios a’m a bheil *bruic* fhathast a’ fuireach ann. Tha amharas agam nach eil.

Agus seo àite eile - Cadha nan Tòn. ’S e cadha bealach cas anns a bheil ceum, air am bi daoine a’ coiseachd. Agus – mura h-eil fios agaibh ca’ eil ur tòn, feumaidh sibh coimhead ann am faclair! Bha Donaidh Friseal, a chruinnich na h-ainmean-àite, dhen bheachd gur e gum biodh duine buailteach tuiteam air a thòn nuair a bhiodh e a’ dìreadh a’ chadha a bu choireach ris an ainm.

Agus seo agaibh eisimpleirean eile de dh'ainmean anns a bheil facal anns an tuiseal ghinideach iolra – *Uamhag nan Gobhar* (the little cave of the goats), *Glaic nan Reitheachan* (the hollow of the rams), *Bruthach nan Càrn* (the brae of the cairns) agus *Meall nam Fiadh* (the hill of the deer).

Nise, tha mi airson trì ainmean, às a CD-ROM seo, a thoirt dhuibh, ann an Gàidhlig an turas seo, agus tha mi a' dol a dh'iarraidh oirbh eadar-theangachadh a dhèanamh orra gu Beurla. Seo iad, ma tha: *Allt Gleann na Gaoithe*, *Faing a' Chùirn Bhàin*, agus *Meall Dubh na Saobhaidh*. An do mhothaich sibh mar a tha na h-uibhir de dh'ainmean-àite stèidhichte air beathaichean agus àiteachan far am biodh daoine a' dèiligeadh ri beathaichean – eich, bruic, reitheachan, caoraich, goibhrean, fèidh, sionnaich... Aaah. Mapaichean. Nach e rudan air leth a th' annta!

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Faclan na seachdaine: tìr-mòr: *mainland*; tuiseal: *case (noun)*; ainmneach: *nominative*; iolra: *plural*; caolachadh: *slenderisation*; caoraich: *sheep*; fèidh: *deer (plural)*; goibhrean (or gobhair): *goats*; sionnaich: *foxes*.

Abairtean na seachdaine: ciamar a chaidh dhuibh?: *how did you get on?*; an do rinn sibh an gnothach?: *did you manage?*; dè mu dheidhinn?: *what about?*; na ghabhas ionnsachadh bhuapa mu ghràmar na Gàidhlig: *what can be learned from them about Gaelic grammar*; bidh buadhair a thèid leis air a shèimheachadh: *an adjective which accompanies it is lenited*; 's e an dàrna riaghailt chudthromach: *the second important rule is*; gu bheil cruth an fhacail anns an tuiseal ghinideach iolra co-ionann ri chruth anns an tuiseal ainmneach shingilte: *that the form of the word in the genitive plural case is the same as its form in the singular nominative case*; beagan gu deas air sin: *a little south of that*; tha amharas agam nach eil: *I suspect [they are] not*; feumaidh sibh coimhead ann am faclair: *you must look in a dictionary*; tha mi a' dol a dh'iarraidh oirbh eadar-theangachadh a dhèanamh orra: *I am going to ask you to translate them*; far am biodh daoine a' dèiligeadh ri beathaichean: *where people would be dealing with animals*; nach e rudan air leth a th' annta: *aren't they special things*.

Puing-ghràmar na seachdaine: *I would like to make a point this week about common abbreviations in speech which I tend to avoid in the Litir because of confusion, and the fact that they are not found in dictionaries. But they are common in speech and I have put two in this week. The first is chan eil fhios a'm. The a'm here stands for agam – it is actually chan eil fhios agam – but in conversation the former is usually used. Also in mura h-eil fios agaibh ca' eil ur tòn (if you don't know where your "tòn" is), tha ca' eil stands for càite a bheil. Sometimes it is shortened even more and written ca'il. You might say to a friend (but not in a formal situation) – ca'il thu dol? for càite a bheil thu a' dol? In some circumstances it is shortened to ca' bheil eg if you are shouting for a child – a Dhòmhnail, ca' bheil thu? (Donald, where are you?) Try and get used to shortening these phrases from what you might learn in a textbook so that your Gaelic sounds more natural.*

Gnàths-cainnt na seachdaine: gur e gum biodh duine buailteach tuiteam air a thòn .. a bu choireach ris an ainm: *it is that a person would be liable to fall on his posterior .. that was responsible for the name. Sometimes buailteach goes with the prepositions do (dha) or air eg tha e buailteach do shabaid (he is prone to fighting); tha iad buailteadh air gèilleadh (they are apt to yield).*

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