

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 * This is Litir 249.*

An t-seachdain sa chaidh, rinn mi mo shlighe thairis air grunn lochan gun a bhith a’ cleachdadh bàta, oir bha iad reòta. Cha robh mi ann an Alba, ge-tà, ach ann am beanntan Nirribhidh, aig còrr is mìle meatair os cionn na mara. Bha a h-uile loch còmhdaichte le deigh thiugh, agus le sneachd geal glan air muin na deighe. Rinn mi mo shlighe air na lochan le bhith a’ sgitheadh orra.

Air an dàrna là de mo thuras, agus mi-fhìn is feadhainn eile à Alba a’ sgitheadh eadar loidsichean is bothain, chaidh sinn tarsainn loch air an robh ainm a thog m’ aire. Litrichidh mi dhuibh e, agus tuigidh sibh carson – LANGAVATNET. Shaoileadh tu gur e “Langa-VAT-net” a chanadh muinntir na dùthcha, ach dh’fhaighnich mi de nighean ann am fear de na loidsichean, agus thuirt ise “Langa-VA-nuh”. Co-dhiù, thuirt mi rithe, “tha e a’ ciallachadh ‘loch fada’, nach eil?” Dh’aidich i gu robh mi ceart.

Bidh mòran agaibh eòlach air loch mòr fada ann an Eilean Leòdhais air a bheil “Loch Langavat”. ’S e ainm annasach a th’ ann, oir tha “Langavat” fhèin a’ ciallachadh “loch fada”. Thàinig e bho na Lochlannaich a bha uaireigin a’ fuireach anns an eilean.

Lorg mi ainmean eile ann an Nirribhidh a bha cuideachd gu math inntinneach dhuinne a tha a’ fuireach ann an Alba. *Sanddalsvatnet* mar eisimpleir – “Loch Dail na Gainmhich”. Thàinig am facal “dail” againne bhon t-seann Lochlannais. Is chaidh sinn seachad air beinn mhòr bhrèagha ris an canar *Blåberge* – coltach ri Blåbheinn anns an Eilean Sgitheanach. Tha an dà ainm a’ ciallachadh “blue mountain” ann am Beurla.

Agus tha an eileamaid “bu” a’ nochdadh an siud ’s an seo, leithid ann am *Bjordalsbu* agus *Kjeldebu*. Tha e a’ ciallachadh *both* no *bothan*. Thàinig na faclan sin, agus *bùth*, a tha a’ ciallachadh “shop”, bhon t-seann Lochlannais. Thàinig, agus am facal *booth* ann am Beurla.

Mus deach mi gu ruige na beanntan, chuir mi seachad madainn ann am Bergen, baile mòr air cladach an iar na dùthcha. Thathar a’ moladh don a h-uile duine a thèid a Bhergen dhol a mhargaidh an èisg. Chan fhaighear iasg nas fheàrr na gheibhear ann a sin. Gu dearbh, tha truisg bheò, a thàinig bhon mhuir an là roimhe, a’ snàmh ann an amar mòr, agus faodaidh tu fear a thaghadh dhut fhèin.

’S e *torsk* a chanas na Nirribhich riutha, agus chan eil duilgheadas ann do Ghaidheal fios a bhith aige gu dè seòrsa èisg a th’ ann, oir thàinig am facal againne *trosk* bho na seann Lochlannaich. Choimhead mi air na h-èisg is maoraich gu lèir anns a’ mhargaidh, agus chan fhaca mi gin eile air an robh ainm coltach ris an ainm Ghàidhlig. Ach dh’aithnich mi ainm fear dhiubh sa spot, oir tha e cumanta ann an ainmean-àite ann an Alba – *laks*, no bradan. Ann an Leòdhas tha Lacasaigh (“abhainn nam bradan”) ann, agus Lacasdail (“dail nam bradan”). Agus faisg air Càrlabhadh ann an taobh iar an eilein tha Loch Lacsabhat Àrd agus Loch Lacsabhat Ìorach ann. Tha Lacsabhat a’ ciallachadh “loch nam bradan”.

Aig toiseach na litreach, bha mi a-mach air *Langavatnet* no *Langavat*. Nuair a choimheadas tu air map de dh’Eilean Leòdhais, chì thu gu bheil barrachd na aon loch air a bheil Loch Langavat. Uill, tha an aon rud fìor ann an Nirribhidh. Ann an aon sgìre, chithear grunn lochan air a bheil *Langavatnet*, ged a tha cuid mòran nas fhaide na feadhainn eile. Chan ann dìreach air map na h-Alba a nochdas na h-aon ainmean-àite a-rithist is a-rithist.

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Faclan na seachdaine: reòta: *frozen*; Nirribhidh: *Norway*; deigh thiugh: *thick ice*; air muin: *on top of*; a' sgitheadh: *skiing*; dh'aidich i: *she admitted*; seann Lochlannais: *Old Norse*; eileamaid: *element*; truisg bheò: *live cod (pl.)*; sa spot: *instantly*.

Abairtean na seachdaine: rinn mi mo shlighe: *I made my way*; còrr is mìle meatair os cionn na mara: *more than a thousand metres above sea level*; eadar loidsichean is bothain: *between lodges and cabins*; a chanadh muinntir na dùthcha: *that the people of the country would say*; thàinig e bho na Lochlannaich: *it came from the Vikings*; dhuinne a tha a' fuireach ann an Alba: *to [those of] us who live in Scotland*; chaidh sinn seachad air beinn bhrèagha: *we went past a beautiful mountain*; mus deach mi gu ruige X: *before I went to X*; chuir mi seachad madainn: *I spent a morning*; feumaidh a h-uile duine a thèid a Bhergen dhol a mhargaidh an èisg: *everyone who goes to Bergen must go to the fish market*; faodaidh tu fear a thaghadh dhut fhèin: *you can choose one for yourself*; choimhead mi air na h-èisg is maoraich gu lèir: *I looked at all the fish and shellfish*; chan ann dìreach air map na h-Alba: *it is not only on the map of Scotland*.

Puing-ghràmaid na seachdaine: Chan fhaighear iasg nas fheàrr na gheibhear ann a sin: *idiomatically we would say in English "you won't get better fish than you get there", or slightly more formally "one won't get better fish than one gets there" but you will note that there is no pronoun in the Gaelic version equivalent to "you" or "one"*. Chan fhaighear and gheibhear are future passive verbal forms which also act as present habitual forms (as do active future forms) – a literal translation would be *"better fish is not got than is got there"*. Look out for other occurrences of these forms with *-(e)ar endings* (eg *ris an canar X* – *"which is called X"*; *chithear grunn lochan* – *a number of lochs are, can be seen*).

Gnàths-cainnt na seachdaine: Thàinig, agus am facal *booth* ann am Beurla: *so did the word booth in English. Note the repetition of the verb (thàinig) here, followed by agus – this is the idiomatic way of saying "so did..." in Gaelic. Here are two other examples and note the repetition of the verb: Bha Iain ann. Bha agus Sìne (John was there. So was Jean); Chrìochnaich Ailig an rèis. Chrìochnaich agus Anna (Alex finished the race. So did Ann).*

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