

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh **le Ruairidh MacIlleathain**

Poll an Ròid

*A special programme, in the form of a “letter”, designed for 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, Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.macleon@bbc.co.uk. This is Litir 632. Note that there is also a simplified version called *An Litir Bheag* which is likewise available on the BBC website. *Litir Bheag* 328 corresponds to *Litir* 632.*

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh an t-seachdain sa chaidh mu chairidhean agus mar a chaidh bradan sligeach a ghlacadh ann an tè dhiubh ann an Linne Fharair, faisg air Inbhir Nis, anns an t-seachdamh linn deug. 'S dòcha gum bu chòir dhomh rudeigin a ràdh mun ainm-àite sin. Chan e Linne Fharair no *Beaully Firth* a chanadh muinntir an àite ris an linne. Ann am Beurla chanadh iad *Loch Beaully* agus ann an Gàidhlig *Poll an Ròid*.

Tha Poll an Ròid a' ciallachadh “the inlet of the rood or cross” – an aon Ròid a chì sinn ann an Taigh an Ròid – *Holyrood House* – ann an Dùn Èideann. 'S e as coireach ris an ainm, a rèir seann làmh-sgrìobhainnean, gun tug Rìgh Alasdair II fearann do mhanaich Dhominicanach ann an Inbhir Nis. Bha sin timcheall na bliadhna dà cheud dheug, trithead 's a sia (1236). Thogadh manachainn anns a' bhaile. Bha Inbhir Nis air slighe eilthreachd gu ruige Baile Dhubhthaich ann an Siorrachd Rois a bha na bhaile naomh. Agus dh'òrdaich an Rìgh gum biodh ròd, no crois, air a cur suas airson taisdealaich a bhrosnachadh.

Chan eil sinn buileach cinnteach cà' robh a' chrois. Tha e coltach gun robh i air eilean beag bìodach, no 's dòcha oitir, anns an linne gu siar air Port Cheasaig. Chan eil sgeul air an eilean no air a' chrois an-diugh. Ach dh'fhàg i a h-ainm air an àite – Poll an Ròid no, uaireannan ann am Beurla, *the Rood Pool* (sin R-O-O-D).

Co-dhiù, air ais do na cairidhean. Bha cuid dhiubh fada, barrachd na mìle troigh a dh'fhaid. Bha leth-mhìle anns an tè aig Bun Chriùbh. Agus cha robh iad air fad air an dèanamh de chlachan. Bha bunait cloiche aca ach gu h-àrd bha iad air an dèanamh de fhiodh. **Bha am fiodh air a shnìomh mar chliath.** Bha sin a' ciallachadh gum b' fheudar do na daoine leis an robh na cairidhean obair-càraidh a dhèanamh orra gu tric.

A bharrachd air cairidhean bhiodh muinntir an àite a' cur a-mach lìn nuair a bha tràigh mhòr ann. Thigeadh na sgadain a-steach le lìonadh na mara agus, uaireannan, gheibhte suas ri mìle dhiubh anns an aon lìon. Smaoinichibh! Mìle sgadan! **B' e sin an t-iasgach.**

'S e *garbhag* a chanadh muinntir an àite ris na sgadain bheaga sin. Thàinig am facal *garbhag* bhon Albais *garvie*. Ach, gu h-inntinneach, chaidh *garbhag* air ais don Bheurla ann an sgìre Inbhir Nis mar *garvack*. Ann an seachd ceud deug, ceathrad 's a naoi (1749) bha an Eaglais a' gearain mu iasgach air an t-Sàbaid. Sgrìobh iad mu “breach of the Lord's Day for fishing for garvacks with their nets”.

Bha na garbhagan air leth cudromach mar bhiadh do mhuinntir an àite. Bhiodh iad gan sailleadh agus gan ithe fad a' gheamhraidh. Ach an robhar a' glacadh bhradan a bharrachd air garbhagan anns na lìn? Tha amharas agam gun robh. Agus tha aithrisean bhon naoidheamh linn deug gun do dh'fheuch MacShimidh air stad a chur air cleachdadh nan lìon airson iasgach. Deasbad air còraichean lìn a chur gu feum air cladaichean na h-Alba? Chan eil càil às ùr fon ghrèin!

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Faclan na Litreach: cairidh: *stone fish trap*; bradan sligeach: *sturgeon*; Linne Fharair: *Beaully Firth*; Poll an Ròid: *Beaully Firth*; manaich: *monks, friars*; manachainn: *monastery*; dh'òrdaich: *ordered*; lìn: *nets*; sgadain: *herring (pl)*; smaoinichibh!: *think [of that]!*; garbhag: *garvie, sprat, small herring (garvack in local English)*.

Abairtean na Litreach: 'S e as coireach ris an ainm: *what is responsible for the name*; seann làmh-sgrìobhainnean: *old manuscripts*; gun tug Rìgh Alasdair II fearann: *that King Alexander II gave land*; air slighe eilthreachd gu ruige Baile Dhubhthaich: *on a pilgrimage route to Tain*; baile naomh: *a holy town*; airson taisdealaich a bhrosnachadh: *to encourage travellers/pilgrims*; air eilean beag bìodach, no 's dòcha oitir: *on a tiny island, or perhaps a sandbank*; gu siar air Port Cheasaig: *west of South Kessock*; barrachd na mìle troigh a dh'fhaid: *more than a thousand feet in length*; bha leth-mhìle anns an tè aig Bun Chriùbh: *the one at Bunchrew was more than half a mile [in length]*; cha robh iad air fad air an dèanamh de chlachan: *they were not entirely made of stones*; bunait cloiche: *a stone foundation*; gum b' fheudar do na daoine obair-càraidh a dhèanamh orra: *that the people had to perform repair work on them*; nuair a bha tràigh mhòr ann: *at low tide*; gheibhte suas ri mìle dhiubh anns an aon lìon: *up to a thousand of them would be got in the one net*; mu iasgach air an t-Sàbaid: *about fishing on the Sabbath*; bhiodh iad gan sailleadh agus gan ithe fad a' gheamhraidh: *they would salt them and eat them all winter*; an robhar a' glacadh bhradan?: *were salmon being caught?*; tha amharas agam gun robh: *I suspect there were*; gun do dh'fheuch MacShimidh air stad a chur air cleachdadh nan lìon: *that Fraser of Lovat tried to stop fishing with nets*; deasbad air còraichean lìn a chur gu feum: *a debate on the right to use nets*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: **Bha am fiodh air a shnìomh mar chliath:** *the wood was interlaced like a hurdle/wickerwork structure. Did you notice the word cliathadh in the Litir a fortnight ago? There it meant "harrowing" (agricultural). If you think of the latticed structure of a harrow (cliath), you'll see the connection. Incidentally, this is the same word found in the Gaelic (and Irish) for the city of Dublin – Baile Àtha Cliath – the settlement of the hurdled ford, named for a shallow part of the Liffey. Dublin also comes from Gaelic – Dubh Linn (dark pool). Interestingly, Easter Ross also boasts a Dublin, a tiny settlement presumably named for a pool on a tributary of the Averon River.*

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: **B' e sin an t-iasgach:** *that was the fishing [it was fantastic].*

Tha "Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh" air a maoinachadh le MG ALBA