

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Tairbeartan na h-Alba (1)

Each week the West Highland Free Press publishes the text for Ruairidh's "Letter to Gaelic Learners" on BBC Radio nan Gàidheal (103.5-105 FM). Broadcasts are as follows: 2:55pm on Sunday as part of BBC Radio nan Gàidheal's hour-long learning zone, following the Gaelic Learners' programme 'SpeakGaelic Extra', with a repeat at 10.30 pm on Wednesday. This is Litir 1,345. There is also a simpler version – An Litir Bheag – which is broadcast at 2:30pm each Sunday. Litir Bheag 1,041 corresponds to Litir 1,345. The Litir is also available at www.bbc.co.uk/litir and www.learn Gaelic.scot/litir. Ruairidh can be contacted at fios@learn Gaelic.scot.

Bidh sibh eòlach air an fhacal *tairbeart*, tha mi cinnteach. 'S aithne dhomh dusan àite ann an Alba a tha ainmichte mar 'An Tairbeart'. 'S e *Tarbert* no *Tarbet* an dreach air an ainm ann am Beurla.

Dè tha e a' ciallachadh? Seo na chanas am Faclair Beag: Tairbeart – *portage site* no *isthmus*. Uill, 's e *isthmus* – pìos talmhainn a tha caol eadar pìosan a tha leathann – àite math airson bàta a ghiùlan eadar dà phìos uisge – an dearbh chiall a th' air *portage*. 'S e facal Frangach a th' ann am *portage* – *portage* – a' ciallachadh 'giùlan'.

Tha sinn a' saoilinn gum biodh na Lochlannaich a' cleachdadh tairbeartan na h-Alba. No **cuid aca**, co-dhiù. Le sin, tha beachd air èirigh anns a' choimhearsnachd gur e facal Lochlannach a th' ann an *tairbeart*. Ach chan e. 'S e facal Gàidhlig a th' ann. Tha e a' tighinn bho dhà fhreumh – *tar* (mar ann an *thar* no *tarsainn*) a' ciallachadh 'over' agus *beir* (math dh'fhaodte *bert* ann an seann Ghàidhlig) a' ciallachadh 'carrying'. *Carrying over. Portage. Tairbeart.*

A bheil am facal cho sean 's gu bheil e a' toirt fianais dhuinn gun robh na Gàidheil a' cleachdadh tairbeartan mus tàinig na Lochlannaich a dh'Alba anns an ochdamh is naoidheamh linn? Chanainn gu bheil sin coltach, gu h-àraidh nuair a tha sinn a' cuimhneachadh gun robh na bàtaichean aig na seann Ghàidheil gu tric air an dèanamh de sheiche bà. Bha iad aotrom. Bha e air a bhith furasta gu leòr do dhaoine na bàtaichean a chur air rolairean no feamainn agus am putadh thairis air tairbeart.

Tha dà àite dheug ann an Alba far a bheil am facal *tairbeart*, no dreach na Beurla dheth, air a' mhapa. Tha Tairbeart na Hearadh ainmeil ann an saoghal nan Gàidheal. Anns an t-seann aimsir, bha e a' toirt cothrom do dhaoine bàta a ghluasad bhon Chuan Siar don Chuan Sgìth, gun a dhol tro Chaolas na Hearadh. Bha an caolas sin dùbhlach do sheann mharaichean anns na làithean ro chairtean-mara agus GPS. Tha tòrr oitirean ann.

Tha Hearaich gu leòr a' fuireach air an Tairbeart. 'S e an Tairbeart am baile as motha anns na Hearadh. Bidh sibh a' mothachadh gu bheil sinn ag ràdh 'air an Tairbeart' seach 'anns an Tairbeart'. Tha an tairbeart sin a' ceangal Ceann a Tuath na Hearadh **ris a' Cheann a Deas**.

Tha trì tairbeartan eile ann an eileanan air taobh an iar na Gàidhealtachd. Tha tè ann am meadhan Eilean Dhiùra. Bhiodh cothrom aig daoine an eathraichean a thoirt

thairis air an tairbeart eadar Linne Dhiùra agus an Linne Cholbhasach. Bhiodh sin a' leigeil leatha Caol Ìle, deas air Diùra, a sheachnadh. Agus bhiodh iad a' seachnadh a' Choire Bhreacain gu tuath. Tha na sruthan-mara an sin cunnartach.

Faisg air Diùra, ann an Eilean Ghiogha, tha tairbeart ann. Tha e ann an ceann a tuath an eilein. Chan eil mi a' faicinn gum biodh e ciallach bàtaichean a thoirt gu tìr an sin. Bhiodh e na b' fhasa seòladh timcheall ceann a tuath an eilein. Chanainn, anns an eisimpleir seo, gu bheil 'tairbeart' a' ciallachadh *isthmus* seach *portage place*. Bheir sinn sùil air a' chòrr de na tairbeartan an-ath-sheachdain.

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Faclan na Litreach: tairbeart: *isthmus, portage place*; an dearbh chiall: *the same meaning*; freumh: *root*; aotrom: *light*; oitirean: *sand banks, shoals*; Eilean Ghiogha: *Isle of Gigha*.

Abairtean na Litreach: 'S aithne dhomh dusan àite a tha ainmichte mar: *I know a dozen places named as*; an dreach air an ainm: *the form of the name*; pìos talmhainn a tha caol eadar pìosan a tha leathann: *a piece of land that is narrow between pieces that are broad*; tha sinn a' saoilinn: *we think/imagine*; gum biodh na Lochlannaich a' cleachdadh tairbeartan na h-Alba: *that the Vikings would use Scotland's portage places*; cho sean 's gu bheil e a' toirt fianais dhuinn: *so old that they give us evidence*; gu tric air an dèanamh de sheiche bà: *were often made of cow hide*; a' toirt cothrom do dhaoine bàta a ghluasad bhon Chuan Siar don Chuan Sgìth: *giving people an opportunity to move a boat from the Atlantic to the Minch*; gun a dhol tro Chaolas na Hearadh: *without going through the Sound of Harris*; dùbhlànach do sheann mharaichean anns na làithean ro chairtean-mara: *challenging to old mariners in the days before marine charts*; tha tè ann am meadhan Eilean Dhiùra: *there is one in the middle of the Isle of Jura*; eadar Linne Dhiùra agus an Linne Cholbhasach: *between the Sound of Jura and the Sound of Colonsay*; a' leigeil leatha Caol Ìle, deas air Diùra, a sheachnadh: *allowing them to avoid the Sound of Islay, south of Jura*; a' seachnadh a' Choire Bhreacain gu tuath: *avoiding the Corryvreckan in the north*; bhiodh e na b' fhasa seòladh timcheall ceann a tuath an eilein: *it would be easier to sail around the northern end of the island*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: a' ceangal Ceann a Tuath na Hearadh ris a' Cheann a Deas: *connects North Harris to the South (of Harris)*. *I could have said ri Ceann a Deas na Hearadh but the phraseology I chose meant I did not have to repeat 'na Hearadh'.* *Too much close repetition of particular words, or phrases, is to be avoided in radio journalism!* Ceann a deas means 'the southerly end' and can stand for the south of a country, region or continent. Tha na cànanan ann an ceann a tuath nan Innseachan eadar-dhealaichte bhon fheadhainn anns a' cheann a deas 'the languages in the north of India are different from those in the south'.

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: No cuid aca, co-dhiù: *or some of them, at least*.

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