

An Litir Bheag le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

An Litir Bheag is a shortened and simplified version of Ruairidh's Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh (also available on the BBC website), designed for those who are at an earlier stage of learning Gaelic. The topic each week is the same as Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh so that, once the Litir Bheag is mastered, a student of the language might wish to try the full Litir. This is Litir Bheag 222 (which corresponds to Litir 526). Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.macleane@bbc.co.uk.

North of Assynt, on the western seaboard of Scotland, there is Eddrachillis Bay. Eddrachillis. It comes from the Gaelic Eadar Dà Chaolas ["between two kyles"]. Eadar Dà Chaolas – Eadrachaolas – Eddrachillis. But what are the two kyles (narrows) in the name?

I was looking recently at the Atlas Maior. The Atlas is books of old maps. Joan Blaeu published the book in the Netherlands in 1665. On Blaeu's maps, part of the north-west of Scotland is named as Edir-dacheules. It's not a bay, but a geographical area.

On Blaeu's map, the area runs from the Kyle of Durness in the north to Kylesku in the south. Those are the two kyles (narrows). Eadar Dà Chaolas was the area between the Kyle of Durness and Kylesku. The name of the bay – Eddrachillis Bay – remembers the old name of the area.

The word eadar appears often in place names. There is Eadar Dà Fhadhail (between two sea-fords) in Uig in Lewis. In Harris, there are

Gu tuath air Asainte, air taobh an iar na h-Alba, tha Eddrachillis Bay. Eddrachillis. Tha e a' tighinn bhon Ghàidhlig Eadar Dà Chaolas. Eadar Dà Chaolas – Eadrachaolas – Eddrachillis. Ach dè an dà chaolas anns an ainm?

Bha mi a' coimhead o chionn ghoirid air an Atlas Maior. 'S e an Atlas leabhraichean de sheann mhapaichean. Dh'fhoillsich Joan Blaeu an leabhar anns an Òlaind ann an sia ceud deug, seasgad 's a còig (1665). Air mapaichean Bhlaeu, tha pàirt de cheann an iar-thuath na h-Alba ainmichte mar Edir-dacheules. Chan e bàgh a tha ann, ach sgìre.

Air mapa Bhlaeu, tha an sgìre a' ruith bho Chaolas Dhiùirinis anns a' cheann a tuath gu ruige an Caolas Cumhang anns a' cheann a deas. 'S iad sin an dà chaolas. B' e Eadar Dà Chaolas an sgìre eadar Caolas Dhiùirinis agus an Caolas Cumhang. Tha ainm a' bhàigh – Eddrachillis Bay – a' cuimhneachadh seann ainm na sgìre.

Tha am facal eadar a' nochdadh gu tric ann an ainmean-àite. Tha Eadar Dà Fhadhail (Ardroil) ann an Sgìre Ùige

two hills called *Giolabhal Glas* and *Giolabhal Dubh*. There is a hill between them. The hill's name is *Cnoc Eadar Dà Bheinn*.

Near Glenbrittle on Skye there is a pass between Beinn Stac and Beinn a' Bhràghad. The name of the pass is Bealach Eadar Dà Bheinn (pass between two mountains). There is a pass of the same name in Stirlingshire. And there is Loch Eadar Dà Bheinn in Coigach in Wester Ross. In Raasay, between Baile Meadhanach and Baile a' Chùirn, there is a loch. The loch is called Loch Eadar Dà Bhaile.

And there is Meall Eadar an Dà Chuinneag in Easter Ross. There are two hills there called A' Chuinneag ("the milk pail, stoup"). A' Chuinneag Mhòr and A' Chuinneag Bheag. There is another mountain in Assynt called A' Chuinneag. On Blaeu's map it is Ben Quinag that is written. And that is how it is on the maps today – Quinag. But locals call her Cuinneag. And we say A' Chuinneag in Gaelic. From the summit of A' Chuinneag, you get a good view of Eddrachillis.

ann an Leòdhas. Anns na Hearadh, tha dà bheinn air a bheil *Giolabhal Glas* agus *Giolabhal Dubh*. Tha cnoc eatarra. 'S e ainm a' chnuic *Cnoc Eadar Dà Bheinn*.

Faisg air Gleann Bhreatail anns an Eilean Sgitheanach, tha bealach eadar Beinn Stac agus Beinn a' Bhràghad. 'S e ainm a' bhealaich *Bealach Eadar Dà Bheinn*. Tha bealach dhen aon ainm ann an Siorrachd Shruighlea. Agus tha *Loch Eadar Dà Bheinn* anns a' Chòigich, air taobh siar Rois. Ann an Ratharsair, eadar am Baile Meadhanach agus Baile a' Chùirn, tha loch. 'S e ainm an locha *Loch Eadar Dà Bhaile*.

Agus tha *Meall Eadar an Dà Chuinneag* ann an taobh sear Rois. Tha dà bheinn an sin air a bheil *A' Chuinneag*. *A' Chuinneag Mhòr* agus *A' Chuinneag Bheag*. Tha beinn eile air a bheil *A' Chuinneag*. Ach air mapa Bhlaeu 's e *Ben Quinag* a tha sgrìobhte. Agus tha i mar sin air na mapaichean an-diugh – *Quinag*. Ach canaidh muinntir an àite *Cuinneag* rithe. Agus canaidh sinn *A' Chuinneag* ann an Gàidhlig. Bho mhullach na *Cuinneig*, gheibh sibh sealladh math de dh'Eadar Dà Chaolas.