

## 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 263 (which corresponds to Litir 567). Ruairidh can be contacted at [roddy.maclean@bbc.co.uk](mailto:roddy.maclean@bbc.co.uk).

*Kebnekaise is the highest mountain in Sweden. It's in a beautiful area. It's in the north, in the Arctic. I was in that area at Easter time. I was skiing across [the] country.*

*That is the country of the Sámi. On the land and on the map, most of the place names are in Sámi. I picked up a word or two of the language. Jávri means "loch". Vággi means "glen"; Čohkka means "mountain top". I hope I said them correctly.*

*There is an interesting thing about the maps in Sweden, at least in the north. There are two names on each of the famous high mountains. For example, there is Kebnekaise. Also, under that name, there is Giebmezáisi. Kebnekaise is the Swedish language form of the name (although it is a Sámi name). It's like Ben Nevis and Beinn Nibheis. Both come from Gaelic. But one of them has an anglicised form.*

*Until thirty years ago, Sámi was written according to Swedish language norms. Now they have*

*'S i Kebnekaise a' bheinn as àirde anns an t-Suain. Tha i ann an sgìre bhrèagha. Tha i anns a' cheann a tuath, anns an Artaig. Bha mi anns an sgìre sin aig àm na Càisge. Bha mi a' sgitheadh thar na dùthcha.*

*Is e sin dùthaich nan Sàmi. Air an tìr agus air a' mhapa, tha a' mhòrchuid de na h-ainmean-àite ann an Sàmais. Thog mi facal no dhà dhen chànan; tha *jávri* a' ciallachadh "loch". Tha *vággi* a' ciallachadh "gleann"; tha *čohkka* a' ciallachadh "mullach beinne". Tha mi an dòchas gun tuirt mi ceart iad.*

*Tha rud inntinneach mu na mapaichean anns an t-Suain, co-dhiù anns a' cheann a tuath. Tha dà ainm air gach tè de na beanntan àrda ainmeil. Mar eisimpleir tha *Kebnekaise* ann. Cuideachd, fon ainm sin, tha *Giebmezáisi* ann. 'S e Kebnekaise an riochd Suaineis air an ainm (ged as e ainm Sàmais a tha ann). 'S e Giebmezáisi an riochd Sàmais. Tha e coltach ri *Ben Nevis* agus *Beinn Nibheis*. Tha an dà chuid a' tighinn bhon Ghàidhlig. Ach tha dreach Beurla air fear dhiubh.*

*Gu trithead bliadhna air ais, bha Sàmais air a sgrìobhadh a rèir nòsan*

*their own way of writing. That is different from the Swedish writing system.*

*But here's an important thing. It affects us in Scotland. The Swedes now put modern Sámi forms on their maps. That's in addition to an old form based on Swedish (where the old form is well known). The Swedes are following an agreement the United Nations made. That is, where there is a minority language, that their spelling will be on the maps.*

*Now, look at the map of Scotland. Compare [it] with the maps of Sweden. On the Ordnance Survey maps, where there is the highest summit in Scotland, there is only "Ben Nevis". The anglicised form only. There's no sign of the Gaelic form. It's time we changed that. "Beinn Nibheis" should also be there.*

Suaineis. A-nise tha dòigh sgrìobhaidh aca fhèin. Tha sin eadar-dhealaichte bho dhòigh-sgrìobhaidh Suaineis.

Ach seo agaibh rud cudromach. Tha e a' bualadh oirnn ann an Alba. Tha na Suainich a' cur riochdan Sàmais an latha an-diugh air na mapaichean a-nise. Tha sin a bharrachd air seann riochd stèidhichte air Suaineis (far a bheil an seann riochd ainmeil). Tha na Suainich a' leantainn aonta a rinn na Dùthchannan Aonaichte. 'S e sin, far a bheil mion-chànan ann, gum bi an litreachadh acasan air mapaichean na dùthcha.

Nise, coimheadaibh air mapa na h-Alba. Dèanaibh coimeas le mapaichean na Suain. Air mapaichean an t-Suirbhìdh Òrdanais far a bheil am mullach as àirde ann an Alba, chan eil ann ach "Ben Nevis". Dreach na Beurla a-mhàin. Chan eil sgeul air dreach na Gàidhlig. Tha an t-àm againn sin atharrachadh. Bu chòir "Beinn Nibheis" a bhith ann cuideachd.