

An Litir Bheag le Ruairidh MacIleathain

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 373 (which corresponds to Litir 677). Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.macleon@bbc.co.uk.

What do Tannochbrae, Balamory and Glendarroch have in common. Well, they're all Scottish towns/villages. They were all on television programmes. And they are not real places. The names were made deliberately for a book or TV programme.

In each name there is at least one Gaelic element. Balamory and Glendarroch are entirely from Gaelic.

Tannochbrae is the village in which the series Dr Finlay's Casebook was based. My parents were very keen on the programme. The name (and the place) were created by the author A J Cronin. For Tannoch, he used the Gaelic element – tamhnach. Tamhnach means "a fertile green field on rough ground". He added a Scots element – brae. And he got Tannochbrae.

We don't hear the word tamhnach in the language today. But the Gaels of Ireland still use it. And it's fairly common in place-names in Ireland and Scotland.

In the far north of the Gaidhealtachd is Tannach. That's near Wick in Caithness. That must

Dè tha anns a' chumantas eadar Tannochbrae, Balamory agus Glendarroch? Uill, 's e bailtean Albannach a tha anna. Bha iad uile air prògraman telebhisein. Agus chan e fìor àiteachan a tha anna. Bha na h-ainmean air an dèanamh a dh'aona-ghnothach airson leabhar no prògram TBh.

Anns gach ainm tha co-dhiù aon eileamaid Ghàidhlig ann. Tha Balamory agus Glendarroch air fad às a' Ghàidhlig.

'S e Tannochbrae am baile anns an robh an sreath phrògraman *Dr Finlay's Casebook* stèidhichte. Bha mo phàrantan gu math measail air a' phrògram. Chaidh an t-ainm (agus an t-àite) a chruthachadh leis an ùghdar A J Cronin. Airson *Tannoch*, chleachd e an eileamaid Ghàidhlig – *tamhnach*. Tha *tamhnach* a' ciallachadh "achadh torrach, gorm air talamh garbh". Chuir e eileamaid à Albais ris – *brae*. Agus fhuair e *Tannochbrae*.

Chan eil sinn a' cluinntinn an fhacail *tamhnach* anns a' chànan an-diugh. Ach tha e fhathast aig Gàidheil na h-Èireann. Agus tha e cumanta gu leòr ann an ainmean-àite ann an Èirinn agus Alba.

Ann am fìor cheann a tuath na Gaidhealtachd tha *Tannach*. Tha sin faisg air Inbhir Ùige ann an Gallaibh. Tha fhios

be An Tamhnach in Gaelic.

There are many Norse names in that area. But there are other Gaelic names as well, such as Kinloch, Dhuloch and Achairn. And tamhnach tells us that the Gaels were cultivating the land. They were farmers.

South of Caithness, tamhnach appears in a few places. Tannachy is in the upland part of East Sutherland, in Strath Brora. Tannachy and Porttannachy are in Moray, near Buckie. There is a Tannock in West Lothian. There is a Tannochside in Lanarkshire.

And they're pretty common in the south-west. Between Ayrshire and Dumfriesshire, there are many of them. On the map, you'll see place-names like Tannoch Burn, Tannoch Flow, Tannockhill, Tannahill, Tannielaggie and Tannacrieff. Well, my time has elapsed. I'll return to this subject next time. Cheerio.

gur e sin An Tamhnach ann an Gàidhlig.

Tha ainmean Lochlannach pailt anns an sgìre sin. Ach tha ainmean Gàidhlig eile ann cuideachd, leithid Kinloch, Dhuloch agus Achairn. Agus tha *tamhnach* ag innse dhuinn gun robh na Gàidheil ag àiteachadh an fhearainn. 'S e tuathanaich a bha annta.

Gu deas air Gallaibh, tha *tamhnach* a' nochdadh ann an grunn àiteachan. Tha Tannachy ann am Bràigh Chat, ann an Srath Bhrùra. Tha Tannachy agus Porttannachy ann am Moireibh, faisg air Bucaidh. Tha Tannock ann an Lodainn an Iar. Tha Tannochside ann an Siorrachd Lannraig.

Agus tha iad rudeigin pailt anns an iar-dheas. Eadar Siorrachd Àir agus Siorrachd Dhùn Phris, tha gu leòr dhiubh ann. Air a' mhapa, chì sibh ainmean-àite mar Tannoch Burn, Tannoch Flow, Tannockhill, Tannahill, Tannielaggie agus Tannacrieff. Uill, tha an ùine air ruith orm. Tillidh mi don chuspair seo an ath thuras. Beannachd leibh.