

## **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 1008 (which corresponds to Litir 1,312). Ruairidh can be contacted at [fios@learngaelic.scot](mailto:fios@learngaelic.scot).*

*I was telling you about Lochindorb Castle. It was built over seven hundred years ago. It is now a ruin.*

*Loch nan Doirb means 'the loch of the minnows'. The burn that flows out of the loch is the Dorback Burn. That is Allt nan Doirbeag. Doirbeag means 'minnow, tadpole or any very small fish'.*

*On the mainland, on the western side of the loch, there is an interesting place name - Achadh na Deanntaige 'the field of the nettle'. Achadh na Deanntaige. I don't know any other place name in which there is the element deanntag.*

*I should have been aware of that on the day I went over to the island. But I wasn't. I went there in a rubber dinghy. I put on short trousers and trainers without socks because my feet were going to be soaked. But when I reached the island there were heaps of nettles there! There were parts of the island where I couldn't walk.*

*The castle is amazing. The walls are thick and high. They are at the end of the island, above the shore. In the middle, between the walls, there is, as it were, a field full*

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh mu Chaisteal Loch nan Doirb. Chaidh a thogail o chionn còrr is seachd ceud bliadhna. Tha e na thobhta a-nise.

Tha Loch nan Doirb a' ciallachadh 'the loch of the minnows'. 'S e an t-allt a ruitheas a-mach às an loch an Dorback Burn. 'S e sin Allt nan Doirbeag. Tha doirbeag a' ciallachadh 'minnow, tadpole or any very small fish'.

Air tìr-mòr, air taobh an iar an locha, tha ainm-àite inntinneach – Achadh na Deanntaige 'the field of the nettle'. Achadh na Deanntaige. Chan aithne dhomh ainm-àite sam bith eile anns a bheil an eileamaid deanntag.

Bu chòir dhomh a bhith mothachail dha sin air an latha a chaidh mi a-null don eilean. Ach cha robh. Chaidh mi ann ann an geòla rubair. Chuir mi briogais ghoirid orm agus brògan spòrs gun stocainnean oir bha mo chasan gu bhith bog fliuch. Ach, nuair a ràinig mi an t-eilean, bha an t-uabhas de dheanntagan ann! Bha pàirtean dhen eilean far nach robh comas agam coiseachd.

Tha an caisteal iongantach. Tha na ballachan tiugh agus àrd. Tha iad aig oir an eilein, os cionn a' chladaich. Anns a' mheadhan, eadar na ballachan, tha mar gum biodh achadh, làn feòir. Bha

*of grass. Other buildings – wooden buildings – were there at one time.*

*Lochindorb was owned by the Comyns. They came from near Lille in France originally. An ancestor of theirs was with William, Duke of Normandy, who defeated the English at the Battle of Hastings. They obtained land in Scotland.*

*In the thirteenth century, the Comyns were among the most powerful families in Scotland. When King Alexander III died, leaving Scotland without a monarch, John Comyn was among the people governing the country. That was until Margaret, Maid of Norway, reached maturity. Although he was Norman on one side, his ancestry on the other side went back to Dòmhnall Bàn. He was the last Gaelic king of Scotland. I'll have more on the Comyns and Lochindorb next week.*

togalaichean eile – togalaichean fiodha – an sin uaireigin.

'S ann leis na Cuimeanaich – *the Comyns* – a bha Loch nan Doirb. Thàinig iad à faisg air Lille anns an Fhraing bho thùs. Bha sinnsear aca cuide ri Uilleam, Diùc Normandaidh, a rinn a' chùis air na Sasannaich aig Blàr Hastings. Fhuair iad fearann ann an Alba.

Anns an treas linn deug, bha na Cuimeanaich am measg nan teaghlaichean a bu chumhachdaiche ann an Alba. Nuair a chaochail Rìgh Alasdair III, a' fàgail Alba gun mhonarc, bha Iain Cuimeanach am measg nan daoine a bha a' riaghladh na dùthcha. Bha sin gus an tigeadh Mairead, Òigh Nirribhidh, gu ìre. Ged a bha e Normanach air aon taobh, bha a shinnsireachd air an taobh eile a' dol air ais gu Dòmhnall Bàn. B' esan an Rìgh Gàidhealach mu dheireadh aig Alba. Bidh tuilleadh agam mu na Cuimeanaich agus Loch nan Doirb an-ath-sheachdain.