

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 1,042 (which corresponds to Litir 1,346). Ruairidh can be contacted at fios@learngaelic.scot.

We were looking at the tarberts of Scotland. In the south, near Maol nan Gall – The Mull of Galloway – there are West Tarbet and East Tarbert. Between them, there is a tarbert or isthmus.

Tarbert Loch Fyne connects Kintyre with Knapdale. By drawing a boat across that isthmus, old mariners would avoid a long sea-journey around the Mull of Kintyre.

Also in the southern Gàidhealtachd, there is Tarbet Loch Lomond. It is famous in history. In 1263, before the Battle of Largs, Norsemen dragged their ships between Loch Long (which is a sea-loch) and Loch Lomond (which is a freshwater loch). They plundered settlements on the shores of Loch Lomond.

There is a tarbert between Loch Linnhe near Fort William and Loch Sunart near Ardnamurchan. You can see 'Glen Tarbert' on maps.

Near Mallaig, there is a tarbert between Loch Morar and Loch Nevis. On the Isle of Canna, there is Tarbert Bay where the island is

Bha sinn a' toirt sùil air tairbeartan na h-Alba. Anns a' cheann a deas, faisg air Maol nan Gall – *The Mull of Galloway* – tha *West Tarbet* agus *East Tarbet*. Eatarra, tha tairbeart no *isthmus*.

Tha Tairbeart Loch Fìne a' ceangal Cinn Tìre ri Cnapadal. Le bhith a' tarraing bàta thairis air an tairbeart sin, bhiodh seann mharaichean a' seachnadh turas-mara fada timcheall Maol Chinn Tìre.

Cuideachd ann an ceann a deas na Gàidhealtachd, tha Tairbeart Loch Laomainn. Tha e ainmeil ann an eachdraidh. Ann an dà cheud deug, seasgadh 's a trì (1263), ro Bhlàr na Leargaidh Ghallta, tharraing Lochlannaich an longan eadar Loch Long (a tha na loch-mara) agus Loch Laomainn (a tha na loch-uisge). Rinn iad creach air bailtean air cladaichean Loch Laomainn.

Tha tairbeart eadar an Linne Dhubh faisg air a' Ghearasdan agus Loch Suaineart faisg air Àird nam Murchan. Chì sibh *Glen Tarbert* air mapaichean.

Faisg air Mallaig, tha tairbeart eadar Loch Mhòrair agus Loch Nibheis. Air Eilean Chanaigh, tha *Tarbert Bay* ann far a bheil an t-eilean caol agus

narrow and flat. And, in Eddrachillis, near Scourie, there is the most northerly tarbert, on the shore of the Sound of Handa.

Those are the tarberts in the west of Scotland. But there are three in the east. One is on an island in the Firth of Forth called Fidra. North of that, on the Isle of May, there is another tarbert. It is a sea-channel at high tide.

In Easter Ross near Portmahomack, there is a very interesting tarbert. There is no obvious isthmus. But the word tairbeart appears often, with the form 'Tarbat' in English. There is Tarbat Ness, where there is a lighthouse. In Portmahomack, there are the Tarbat Church of Scotland, Tarbat Golf Course and Tarbat Historic Trust, among others. But where is the tarbert itself?!

That question was always bugging me. But I reckon I [have] found an answer. I'll tell you about it in the next Litir.

còmhnard. Agus, ann an Eadar Dà Chaolas, faisg air Sgobharaidh, tha an tairbeart as fhaide tuath, air cladach Linne Shannda.

Sin na tairbeartan air taobh an iar na h-Alba. Ach tha trì air an taobh an ear. Tha fear air eilean ann an Linne Fhoirthe ris an canar Fidra. Tuath air sin, air an *Isle of May*, tha tairbeart eile ann. Tha e na chaolas-mara nuair a tha an làn ann.

Ann an Ros an Ear, faisg air Port mo Cholmaig, tha tairbeart air leth inntinneach. Chan eil 'isthmus' follaiseach. Ach tha am facal *tairbeart* a' nochdadh gu tric, leis an dreach 'Tarbat' ann am Beurla. Tha *Tarbat Ness* ann, far a bheil taigh-solais. Ann am Port mo Cholmaig, tha *Tarbat Church of Scotland*, *Tarbat Golf Course* agus *Tarbat Historic Trust*, am measg eile. Ach càit a bheil an tairbeart fhèin?!

Bha a' cheist sin riamh a' cur dragh orm. Ach saoilidh mi gun do lorg mi fuasgladh. Innsidh mi dhuibh mu dheidhinn anns an ath Litir.