

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 1,051 (which corresponds to Litir 1,355). Ruairidh can be contacted at fios@learngaelic.scot.

What is a sgadan glan and a sgadan salach? Clean herring and dirty herring? Well ... wait a moment and I'll tell you.

In front of me I have a copy of an old paper. It was published in Edinburgh in 1846. Its name is 'Directions for Taking and Curing Herrings ...'

It was published by Bòrd na h-Iasgaireachd Bhreatannaich – The Board of British Fisheries. And it was translated into Gaelic. In the middle of the 19th century, many people were capable of reading Gaelic.

Each page is divided between the two languages. The English is on the left(-hand) side and the Gaelic is on the right side. The title of the paper in Gaelic is 'An Seòl air an Glacar agus an Grèidhear an Sgadan ...'

The author was Thomas Dick Lauder. He was 'Rùn-chlèireach' to the Fisheries Board – Secretary to the Fisheries Board. It was the Rev. Alexander MacGregor, Assistant Minister in Kilmuir on Skye, that did the translation.

The author tells us that there are three types of herring – an sgadan glan,

Dè tha ann an sgadan glan agus sgadan salach? Clean herring agus dirty herring? Uill ... fanaibh mionaid agus innsidh mi dhuibh.

Air mo bheulaibh, tha lethbhreac agam de sheann phàipear. Chaidh fhoillseachadh ann an Dùn Èideann ann an ochd ceud deug, ceathrad 's a sia (1846). 'S e an t-ainm a tha air 'Directions for Taking and Curing Herrings ...'

Chaidh fhoillseachadh le Bòrd na h-Iasgaireachd Bhreatannaich – The Board of British Fisheries. Agus bha e air eadar-theangachadh gu Gàidhlig. Ann am meadhan an naoidheamh linn deug, bha an t-uabhas dhaoine comasach air Gàidhlig a leughadh.

Tha gach duilleag air a roinn eadar an dà chànan. Tha a' Bheurla air an taobh chli agus tha a' Ghàidhlig air an taobh dheas. 'S e an tiotal a tha air a' phàipear ann an Gàidhlig 'An Seòl air an Glacar agus an Grèidhear an Sgadan ...'

B' e an t-ùghdar An Ridire Tòmas Dic Lauder. Bha e na 'Rùn-chlèireach' aig Bòrd na h-Iasgaireachd – Secretary to the Fisheries Board. 'S e an t-Urr. Alasdair MacGriogair, Ministear-cuideachaidh ann an Cille Mhoire san Eilean Sgitheanach, a rinn an t-eadar-theangachadh.

Tha an t-ùghdar ag innse dhuinn gu bheil trì seòrsaichean sgadain ann – an

<p>an sgadan salach <i>and</i> an sgadan ruithte. <i>To understand what a sgadan glan is, I must give you two words. Iuchair means fish roe. Mealg means milt or the sperm of the male herrings.</i></p> <p><i>A sgadan glan is a fish that contains roe or milt. But they are not too (well) developed. In English, they are called 'maties'. They are the best herring for eating ['as food'].</i></p> <p><i>It's the sgadan salach, however, that is the most valuable. It looks fatter than the sgadan glan because the roe or milt have grown large. In English, they are called 'full fish'.</i></p> <p><i>There is a third type of fish and that is the sgadan ruithte or 'spent fish'. They no longer contain roe or milt. They are thin and are not so good as food. Now you know what a sgadan glan is!</i></p>	<p>sgadan glan, an sgadan salach agus an sgadan ruithte. Airson tuigsinn dè tha ann an sgadan glan, feumaidh mi dà fhacal a thoirt dhuibh. Tha <i>iuchair</i> a' ciallachadh <i>fish roe</i>. Tha <i>mealg</i> a' ciallachadh <i>milt</i> – no sìol nan sgadan fireann.</p> <p>'S e <i>sgadan glan</i> iasg anns a bheil iuchair no mealg ann. Ach chan eil iad ro leasaichte. Ann am Beurla, canar <i>maties</i> riutha. Is iad sin na sgadain as fheàrr mar bhiadh.</p> <p>'S e an sgadan salach, ge-tà, am fear as luachmhoire. Tha e a' coimhead nas reamhra na 'n sgadan glan oir tha an iuchair no a' mhealg air fàs mòr. Ann am Beurla, canaidh daoine <i>full fish</i> riutha.</p> <p>Tha treas seòrsa ann, agus 's e sin an sgadan ruithte no <i>spent fish</i>. Chan eil iuchair no mealg anna tuilleadh. Tha iad caol agus chan eil iad cho math mar bhiadh. Tha fios agaibh a-nise dè tha ann an 'sgadan glan'!</p>
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