

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 216 (which corresponds to Litir 520). Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.macleon@bbc.co.uk.

A wee book came out recently – The Cromarty Fisherfolk Dialect. It's about the fisherfolk dialect in Cromarty. That dialect is a dialect of Scots. Only two people speak it fluently today.

*Some of the words are like words in other dialects of Scots. For example *bauchles* (old slippers), *belligut* (a greedy person) and *guloot* (a simple man – one who is a groat short of the shilling). And they have words which are not in other dialects, such as *sallikatazaar* which means “a skelp”.*

*But Cromarty was surrounded by Gaels. And there are words in the fisher dialect that came from Gaelic. For example *amitan* (a fool), *boddach* (old man), *buss* (a mouth), *callach* (old woman) and *cootyach* (family group, company or clan). You will recognize the words *amadan*, *bodach*, *bus*, *cailleach* and *cuideachd*.*

*Here are some others: *doorcans* (fir cones used to smoke fish), *dossan* (fringe, forelock), *gob* (the opening or mouth of a receptacle), *laroch* (a house site), *ropach**

Thàinig leabhar beag a-mach o chionn ghoirid – The Cromarty Fisherfolk Dialect. Tha e mu dheidhinn dualchainnt nan iasgairean ann an Cromba. 'S e dualchainnt de dh'Albais a tha anns an dualchainnt sin. Tha dìreach dithis aig a bheil i gu fileanta an-diugh.

*Tha cuid de na faclan coltach ri faclan ann an dualchainntean eile de dh'Albais. Mar eisimpleir, *bauchles* (seann slioparan), *belligut* (neach sanntach), agus *guloot* (fear a tha gròt a dhìth an tastain). Agus tha faclan aca nach eil ann an dualchainntean eile; mar eisimpleir *sallikatazaar* a tha a' ciallachadh “deillseag”.*

*Ach bha Cromba air a chuairt-eachadh le Gàidheil. Agus tha faclan ann an dualchainnt nan iasgairean a thàinig bhon Ghàidhlig. Mar eisimpleir, *amitan* (a fool), *boddach* (old man), *buss* (a mouth), *callach* (old woman) agus *cootyach* (family group, company or clan). Bidh sibh ag aithneachadh nam faclan *amadan*, *bodach*, *bus*, *cailleach* agus *cuideachd*.*

*Seo feadhainn eile: *doorcans* (fir cones used to smoke fish), *dossan* (fringe, forelock), *gob* (the opening or mouth of a receptacle), *laroch* (a house site), *ropach* (untidy), agus *spatyel**

(untidy), and spatyel (grand or well-dressed). You'll recognize the Gaelic words durcan, dosan, gob, làrach, robach and spaideal.

The word they had for themselves was Croompach – that's somebody from Cromarty. That came from the Gaelic Crombach. And they called people from Dingwall Ballachalls. Baile a' Chàil ("cabbage town") was an old Gaelic name for Dingwall.

There was an old well in Cromarty. It was called The Stroopie Well. The water was a cure for many things. Young children took [were taking] the water home. The children got a reward – a wee bannock with a hole in it. In Gaelic it was called a bonnach fallaid. Fallaid is the meal and dough which was not used. In the Cromarty fisherfolk dialect they called that bannock the bonnach faaly.

The people were believing that the bonnach fallaid brought the house good luck. The Gaels were believing that. The Cromarty fisherfolk were believing that. They spoke different languages, but they had much in common.

(grand or well-dressed). Bidh sibh ag aithneachadh nam faclan Gàidhlig durcan, dosan, gob, làrach, robach agus spaideal.

'S e am facal a bha aca orra fhèin Croompach – sin cuideigin à Cromba. Thàinig sin bhon Ghàidhlig Crombach. Agus bha iad ag ràdh Ballachalls ris na daoine à Inbhir Pheofharain. 'S e Baile a' Chàil seann ainm Gàidhlig air Inbhir Pheofharain.

Bha seann tobar ann an Cromba. 'S e The Stroopie Well an t-ainm a bha air. Bha an t-uisge na leigheas airson iomadach rud. Bha clann òg a' toirt an uisge dhachaigh. Bha a' chlann a' faighinn duais – bonnach beag le toll ann. 'S e bonnach fallaid a bha air ann an Gàidhlig. 'S e fallaid a' mhin-fhlùir agus taois nach robh air an cleachdadh. Ann an dualchainnt nan iasgairean Crombach, 's e bonnach faaly a bha iad a' gabhail air a' bhonnach sin.

Bha na daoine a' creidsinn gun robh am bonnach fallaid a' toirt deagh fhortan don taigh. Bha na Gàidheil a' creidsinn sin. Bha na h-iasgairean Crombach a' creidsinn sin. Bha diofar chànanan aca, ach bha mòran anns a' chumantas eatarra.