

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 581 (which corresponds to Litir 885). Ruairidh can be contacted at roddy.maclean@bbc.co.uk.

What is the Gaelic for 'canal'? We have many words in the dictionaries – faoighteach, cladh-abhainn, cladh-shruth, sruth-chlais, cainneal, feadan – and canàl.

I'm considering canals today for two reasons. In two months' time, there will be a large gathering in Inverness. People from around the world will be coming for the World Canals Conference.

They will gather in three places – Eden Court, Drumossie Hotel and, as would be expected, on the Caledonian Canal. I hope the weather will be good. There will plenty of people there that are involved in tourism.

The other reason I have for contemplating canals is that I was in England recently. I spent a few days on a canal. I and three others were in a narrowboat. The journey was good fun.

We were on the Kennet and Avon Canal, between Somerset and Wiltshire. There are no mountains or lakes there, as there are on the Caledonian Canal in Scotland. But it goes through beautiful country, with woodland and grassy fields. In one or

Dè a' Ghàidhlig a th' air 'canal'? Tha faclan gu leòr againn anns na faclairan – faoighteach, cladh-abhainn, cladh-shruth, sruth-chlais, cainneal, feadan – agus canàl.

Tha mi a' meòrachadh air canàlaichean an-diugh air dà adhbhar. An ceann dà mhìos, bidh cruinneachadh mòr ann an Inbhir Nis. Bidh daoine o air feadh an t-saoghail a' tighinn airson Co-labhairt Canàlaichean na Cruinne.

Bidh iad cruinn còmhla ann an trì àiteachan – Eden Court, Taigh-òsta Dhruim Aithisidh agus, mar a bhiodh dùil, air a' Chanàl Chailleannach. Tha mi an dòchas gum bi an aimsir math. Bidh gu leòr ann a tha an sàs ann an turasachd.

'S e an t-adhbhar eile a tha agam airson a bhith a' meòrachadh air canàlaichean gun robh mi ann an Sasainn o chionn ghoirid. Chuir mi seachad beagan làithean air canàl. Bha mi fhìn is triùir eile ann am bàta-cumhang. Bha an turas spòrsail.

'S ann air a' Khennet & Avon Canal a bha sinn, eadar Somerset agus Wiltshire. Chan eil beanntan no lochan ann, mar a tha air a' Chanàl Chailleannach ann an Alba. Ach tha e a' dol tro dhùthaich bhrèagha, le coille agus pàircean. Ann an àite no dhà tha amar-

two places there is an amar-uisge, or aqueduct. They take the canal over a valley.

One of them is the Dundas Aqueduct near Bath. I noticed that it had a Scottish name. I did some research on it when I returned home. The aqueduct was completed in 1805. It was named for Charles Dundas, the chairman of the Kennet and Avon Canal Company. The family had connections to the Lowlands of Scotland.

In addition to that, the project's chief engineer was one John Rennie who was also a Scot. He was involved in working on a few canals in England and Scotland.

Scottish engineers were important in the building of the canals in Britain. Think of Thomas Telford who designed the Caledonian Canal. I hope that those Scots will come to the attention of the people who will be discussing the world's canals in Inverness in two months' time.

uisge, no *aqueduct*. Tha iad sin a' toirt a' chanàil thairis air gleann.

'S e fear dhiubh an *Dundas Aqueduct* faisg air Bath. Mhothaich mi gun robh ainm Albannach air. Rinn mi beagan rannsachaidh air nuair a thill mi dhachaigh. Chaidh crìoch a chur air an amar-uisge ann an ochd ceud deug 's a còig (1805). Chaidh ainmeachadh airson Teàrlach Dundas, cathraiche Companaidh Canàl Khennet & Avon. Bha ceanglaichean aig an teaghlach do Ghalltachd na h-Alba.

A bharrachd air sin, b' e prìomh einnseanair a' phròiseict fear Iain Rennie a bha cuideachd na Albannach. Bha e an sàs ann an obair air grunn chanàlaichean ann an Sasainn agus Alba.

Bha einnseanairean Albannach cudromach ann an togail nan canàlaichean ann am Breatainn. Smaoinichibh air Tòmas Telford a dhealbhaich an Canàl Cailleannach. Tha mi an dòchas gun tig na h-Albannaich sin fo aire nan daoine a bhios a' beachdachadh air canàlaichean an t-saoghail ann an Inbhir Nis an ceann dà mhìos.