

## An Iodhlann

2004.36.1

ON. AC346

Angus MacLean of Scarinish talks to Dr John Holliday about a list of Gaelic words that are going out of use; includes some stories including one about the last changeling of Tìree.

**Holliday:** Very good, it's running (the recording), come in...we'll start again...

**MacLean:** Sure.

**Holliday:** 'Gèimhleag'? (Crowbar.)

**MacLean:** 'Gèimhleag'...O...\*indescipherable\*...close to me, I have to put my other glasses on now, yes, crowbar.

**Holliday:** 'Gèimhleag'.

**MacLean:** 'Gèimhleag'.

**Holliday:** Sacrifice. 'Ìobairt'.

**MacLean:** 'Ìobairt'.

**Holliday:** 'Ìobairt'.

**MacLean:** 'Farachan'.

**Holliday:** 'Farachan'.

**MacLean:** Mallet.

'Faiche'.

**Holliday:** 'Faiche'. That's where the lobsters hide.

**MacLean:** That's it, 'faiche'.

'Mabach'. A 'mabach' man, one who would be stammering or stottering, you know.

**Holliday:** 'Duine mabach' (A stammering man).

**MacLean:** 'Mabach, duine mabach'.

'Tart'.

**Holliday:** 'Tart'.

**MacLean:** Thirst. 'Pathadh' is another word for it. We use 'pathadh' anyway. It's...you don't ever hear that now, 'tart'.

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**Holliday:** You don't.

**MacLean:** But when I was young it was common enough, for people to use it.

‘Lunndaire’.

**Holliday:** ‘Lunndaire’.

**MacLean:** Wake up, you ‘lunndaire’, immediately, they say, in the morning.

**Holliday:** A lazy person?.

**MacLean:** That's it, wake up, you lazy person, immediately!

‘Malcadh’, ‘malcadh’.

**Holliday:** ‘Malcadh’.

**MacLean:** ‘Malcadh’. You get that in wood...it's a kind of ‘wet rot’, is ‘malcadh’.

**Holliday:** Oh right?

**MacLean:** In wood.

‘Glamradh’.

**Holliday:** ‘Glamradh’.

**MacLean:** ‘Glamradh’, you don't hear that these days, I heard it used for a vice, that's what they say, ‘glamradh.’

**Holliday:** And they use to be...wood too?

**MacLean:** Oh yes, yes, yes, it would be...on a joiners bench too. A wooden vice.

‘Dòrlach’. That's it, a clump or a handful of...‘connlach’ no ‘cannlach’ that they say here, ‘connlach’.

**Holliday:** ‘Connlach’...straw.

**MacLean.** Straw.

**MacLean:** ‘Taod’. You don't hear ‘taod’ from people anymore today.

**Holliday:** You don't, ‘taod’.

**MacLean:** Head rope, well it could have been on a horse, it could have been on...any croft animal or similar, it's nothing more than a rope around the head and over the nose, you know.

‘Geinn’.

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**Holliday:** ‘Geinn’.

**MacLean:** ‘Geinn’, that one is easy enough.

**Holliday:** It is.

**MacLean:** It was. The brother of my grandfather, oh, and this was many, many, many years ago, that brother, Ailein Bàn (fair haired Alan) is how he was known, he married for the fourth time when he was over eighty years old, and this was over in Canada, and there was an old man here, Eoghain a’ Mhuillear (Ewan the Miller), and he was in the Post Office in Scarinish over there at that time, and he heard the news that Ailein Bàn had married and he knew fine well what age he was. ‘Oh dear, oh dear, oh dear,’ he said. Wait for this people, ‘s e geinn dheth fhèin a sgoltas an darach!’ (It requires a wedge made of oak to split oak.) (\*note\* Ailein Bàn was related somehow to the woman her married in Canada.)

(Laughter)

And she was the end of Alain Bàn! I believe that it was her as well.

(More laughter).

‘Falman’.

**Holliday:** ‘Falman’.

**MacLean:** They say ‘failmean’ here but I think that ‘falman’ is the correct spelling, ‘f a l m a n’, kneecap.

‘Imcheist’. I was in ‘imcheist’.

**Holliday:** You were.

**MacLean:** ‘Anxiety’.

‘Malairt’. Now, this is an old word, we use it as the equivalent to ‘barter system.’ Specially here, because...

**Holliday:** Money wasn’t...money was scarce.

**MacLean:** The money was scarce. That’s the thing, maybe it was eggs or butter or whatever, it wasn’t paper people would have had to buy things.

Well, ‘faidhir’, that one isn’t so old. ‘Faidhir Ghlaschu’. (Glasgow Fair.)

And, ‘donnal’.

**Holliday:** I haven’t heard that, ‘donnal’.

**MacLean:** ‘Donnal’. The dog was ‘a’ donnalaich’. Howling, ‘donnal’, howl.

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‘Duine stuama’.

**Holliday:** ‘Stuama’.

**MacLean:** ‘Stuama’.

**Holliday:** Steady person.

**MacLean:** That’s it, a steady person who is consistently reliable in their personality.

‘Neoni’. Well, that one is, they would use that a lot but it’s a long time since I’ve heard it.

**Holliday:** Uhuh, using it regarding numbers, ‘neoni a h-aon, ceithir a h-aon’...

**MacLean:** Well, here it would be...that’s not entirely what was meant by it here, it also meant...a small amount of anything...if you were going to eat cake or something like that you might say ‘Oh, I’ll only have ‘neoni’ (a small amount) of that.’

**Holliday:** Oh right.

**MacLean:** Just a little, little bit is what they meant here.

Oh, ‘cladhaire’. Oh aren’t you a ‘cladhaire!’ But here, by ‘cladhaire’, they meant some kind of idiot, but that’s not what it was, a ‘cladhaire’ is...no one else has this information of mine anyway, but it meant a person who lived in the churchyard, a churchyard dweller, there was no one here with that information of mine anyway.

**Holliday:** There wasn’t.

**MacLean:** ‘Duine gun furas’. A person without patience. ‘Furas’. Have you heard that one, surely you have.

**Holliday:** I haven’t.

**MacLean:** You haven’t? ‘Furas’?

‘Iall’. Well, it’s been many days since I’ve heard ‘iall’ anyway...you would put an ‘iall’ on a flail, you know...for threshing in their barn, the ‘iall’ (leather thong/strap) would be between the flail and the handle.

**Holliday:** I understand, uhuh.

**MacLean:** It’s not a rope and it’s not a string or anything like that but an ‘iall’, it’s made of the pelt of a sheep or something like that that they would have had.

Come over here and ‘gar’ yourself.

**Holliday:** ‘Garadh’?

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**MacLean:** ‘Garadh’.

**Holliday:** It’s not ‘garden’, it’s something else?

**MacLean:** ‘A d h’, no, ‘garadh’.

**Holliday:** ‘Garadh’.

**MacLean:** Warming. Warm yourself at the fire.

**Holliday:** ‘Gar thu fhèin’.

**MacLean:** It’s ‘gar thu fhèin aig an tinnich’ (warm yourself at the fire), but, eh, ‘bheir garradh math dhut fhèin’ (give yourself a warming), you know, using it in that ‘sense’.

**Holliday:** I understand.

**MacLean:** It’s warming.

Now, ‘Feabhas’.

You’ve got that one anyway, ‘feabhas’. Improvement.

‘Luime lom’. That’s...nothing could be more ‘loma’ than that! ‘Luime lom.’ Just absolutely bare!

‘Tàl’. Well, you don’t here that one these days either...

**Holliday:** You don’t, what’s a ‘tâl?’

**MacLean:** Tool. It’s an ‘a d z e’ adze that some say...you can say it in three different ways. It’s like...the way you see it written in the world today, it’s ‘a d z e.’ Carpenters who work in boats, they would say ‘ite’. And a joiner, they would say ‘ite’ with a different pronunciation.

**Holliday:** Uhuh. ‘Ite’ is ‘Ite’ uhuh. I understand.

**MacLean:** ‘Adze’ is ‘ite’ is ‘ite’, it depended on the tradesperson...the way they might say it.

‘Innean’ without a doubt, anvil.

‘Geilb’. You don’t hear anyone saying ‘geilb’ now, it’s a wood chisel.

And ‘snasail’...‘o bha sineach air a dhèanamh gu snasail’ (Oh that was made well)...it was strong and it was made beautifully, anything at all, from wood or iron, something that was made well.

‘Gaoid’.

**Holliday:** ‘Gaoid’.

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**MacLean:** Defect in health. It's... 'bha gaoid anns an duine sin' (that man had a health defect)...in whatever way.

**Holliday:** Something was wrong.

**MacLean:** Something was wrong, he had a health defect, yes.

Oh, 'faradh nan cearc' (hen roost), you've got that one already.

'Fannadh'. Setting hand lines. Someone would be 'a' fannadh' and someone else would be 'a' golmanach'...no...

**Holliday:** 'A' golmanach'...

**MacLean:** 'Golmanach'.

**Holliday:** That's...sculling...

**MacLean:** That's it.

**Holliday:** With a small line...

**MacLean:** A small line.

**Holliday:** A big line?

**MacLean:** Oh, a small line.

**Holliday:** A small line.

**MacLean:** It was a wee bit different with the big lines, I'm not sure what...I never saw it done.

'Ealag'. You would get an 'ealag' once upon a time on the beach. It's a bit that would be cut from a tree, maybe it would be this breadth from the tree and...it would have that depth in it of a section of the tree, and the hole, put in it, and it would...have some iron around it, a band of iron around the hole. And, it was for...using an adze or an axe, maybe you would make kindling or something like that...and that 'ealag', it was fiercely good for that work. It was common enough here when I was young, an 'ealag', nearly every croft had an 'ealag' (chopping block).

**Holliday:** Did they?

**MacLean:** Now, 'dis'.

**Holliday:** 'Dis'.

**MacLean:** 'Dis'.

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**Holliday:** ‘Feeling cold.’

**MacLean:** Brrrr. You are prone to feeling the cold, you know, ‘that thu dis’, you are.

‘Teas, teis-meadhan’.

**Holliday:** ‘Teis-meadhan’. Right in the middle.

**MacLean:** Yes, right in the middle, ‘teis-meadhan’.

‘Gearnal’. That one is common enough here, but you don’t hear it these days. (Meal-chest). (\*note\* a big chest with three sections, for oatmeal, white flour and wheat flour.)

Oh, isn’t it ‘gàbhaidh’!

**Holliday:** ‘Gàbhaidh’!

**MacLean:** ‘Gàbhaidh’.

**Holliday:** ‘Gàbhaidh’.

**MacLean:** ‘Nach eil e gàbhaidh’. (Isn’t it) terrible.

That’s what they say in Skye, there have different words...o, yes, isn’t it ‘doirbh’ (terrible), that’s what they say in the Isle of Skye!

**Holliday:** They do say that.

**MacLean:** But it’s ‘gàbhaidh’ that they say here.

‘Farchluais’.

**Holliday:** ‘Farchluais’.

**MacLean:** ‘Farchluais’. Evesdropping.

**Holliday:** ‘Tha mi a’ dèanamh farchluais?’ (Asking about the correct way to use the sentence, I am doing some evesdropping?).

**MacLean:** Yes, aye. In another sense...it’s a better way to be doing some ‘cluaiseadh’ (listening in). You weren’t supposed to be doing it!

‘Nochd’. ‘Nochd thu fhèin’. Reveal yourself.

‘A’ stri, a’ stri ri rud’ (struggling with something)...\*indecipherable. Struggling, I’m struggling with this thing since yesterday, because...

**Holliday:** Yes.

**MacLean:** Eh, ‘ailbheag’. That’s what they’d say to it.

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**Holliday:** ‘Ailbheag’.

**MacLean:** ‘Ailbheag’. How many ‘ailbheag’ are in that chain there?

**Holliday:** O, right?

**MacLean:** Link.

**Holliday:** The first page, that’s good!

**MacLean:** Oh, this is a good one. It’s...in Tìree, they would say ‘fualaid’. There was never an ‘r’ in it...because the Tìrisdich, they were never good at putting an ‘r’ in a word if it could be left out! Eh, and it’s harder to say if you...if you put an ‘r’ into it, the letter ‘r’. ‘Fuarlit’. And it’s simply ‘fuar’, cold. And ‘lite’, porridge.

**Holliday:** Uhuh. Do you use the word ‘lite’ for ‘brochan’ (porridge)?

**MacLean:** Well, no...that’s what they say away far away from here...I never heard anything but ‘brochan’ on this island.

**Holliday:** You didn’t. But you do have ‘fuarlit’.

**MacLean:** Yes, ‘fuarlit’.

**Holliday:** Poultice. And what stuff did you use for the poultices then?

**MacLean:** Eh, oats, you know, the same stuff, the same way you’d make porridge, cold porridge, that’s what they put on the...if anyone had anything that was festering...they had different methods, porridge was one of them...soap and sugar was applied or used, Epsom Salts and...it’s lint they would have had once upon a time to put...Epsom Salts were melted in a cup and a piece of that lint was put in it and applied to...whatever was festering on you and it would draw on the...oh, now.

**Holliday:** Stuff.

**MacLean:** On the stuff!

O, here is another one that they use in Islay...and this word is drawn out very fiercely, this word that they have, and it fills their mouths as they say it...‘O, nach eil e fuathasach’ they say, isn’t it ‘terrible’, that’s what they say in Islay, terrible.

**Holliday:** Uhuh, and what would you say here?

**MacLean:** Well, it’s...we’d say here...‘uabhasach’, well we’d say ‘fuathasach’ here too, but it’s not drawn out in the same way as the folk from Islay do it.

‘Anabarrach’.

**Holliday:** Do you say ‘ceò nan losgann’? I heard that, Bella was saying that...last week...there was very thick fog...and she said that they say ‘tha ceò na losgann’ in Islay.



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**MacLean:** I've never heard that.

**Holliday:** You haven't?

**MacLean:** No, I've never heard that.

**Holliday:** 'Anabarrach'. Very. And what do you say? 'Fasg-'

**MacLean:** 'Fasgnag'.

**Holliday:** 'Fasg-nag'.

**MacLean:** 'Fasgnag'.

**Holliday:** Uhuh. What is a...oh right, I understand... 'criathar'...

**MacLean:** 'Criathar'... 'criathar' but...I have 'riddle', it's not holes at all, it's just...the whole skin without any holes at all in it and they would use it to winnow the seed if they didn't have a mill or anything like it... \*indiscipherable - usually you'd get someone in the middle who wasn't milling?\*... it's an old tin that they would have, not a 'fasgnag', it wasn't much more than an inch deep and you would put the grains on it, with the wind, you know...you would have them like this \*shakes papers\* and the grains...or chaff...

**Holliday:** Would fall.

**MacLean:** They would fall straight down...and the 'chàth' would go with the wind, the chaff.

**Holliday:** Uhuh, I understand...

**MacLean:** 'Fasgnag'.

'Fàrdachd'. 'Fàrdachd', dwelling, 'fàrdachd'... a dwelling of any description. 'Fàrdachd'.

'Sùcan' (an earthen pot). They don't use 'sùcan's here now anyway.

**Holliday:** They don't.

**MacLean:** Hmm. 'Tarchuis' (contempt or scorn).

**Holliday:** 'Tarchuis'?

**MacLean:** 'Tarchuis'. How was it...

'S math an coicare an t-acras  
'S mairig a ni tarchuis air biadh;  
Stapag eòrn' an sail mo bhròige -  
'M biadh a b'fharr a dh'ith mi riamh.'

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(Hunger is a good cook,  
Woe to him who sneers at food;  
Barley crowdie in my shoe -  
The sweetest food I ever knew)

That's the word, 'tarchuis'.

(\*This translation of the above proverb can be found in the 1996 edition of Gaelic Proverbs edited by Alexander Nicolson on page 304. The word is written as 'tarcuis' there but can be found with varying different spellings, another example being 'tailceis'.\*)

'Ospag'. 'Thug e ospag às'. (He let out a sob).

**Holliday:** Oh, he did.

**MacLean:** 'Sob'...

They would say 'àmh' here. And 'tàmh'. My grandfather, he would say 'tàmh (rest).'

'Sùiste'. Flail.

'Bèarn'. Gap. If you chip a plate or do something similar, 'oh, there's a 'bèarn' in that now.'

'Deanmholta'.

**Holliday:** 'Deanmholta'.

**MacLean:** 'Deanmholta'.

**Holliday:** 'Deanmholta'.

**MacLean:** If you made anything, out of iron or...

**Holliday:**...well made?

**MacLean:** That was made with strength, 'deanmholta.'

'Fadaidh ris an tinnich' (Igniting the fire). 'Fadadh' (igniting).

You could, there were lots of methods, they way they would bring...light a fire for you...they would often have a wee bellows, they hold paper up to the front of the 'stove' as well.

'Falaisg. Falaisg'.

**Holliday:** Did that ever happen here?

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**MacLean:** It's...there wasn't heather here, but there was old grass that they would want to clear...if they wanted to plough and maybe...there wasn't many animals at that time anyway, out on the crofts...who would keep the grass cut, and it would grow, oh, it would grow up close to a foot in height, and if the moisture went out of it they had to burn it, before the place could be ploughed.

**Holliday:** So 'falaisg' did happen.

**MacLean:** Aye, that's it.

O, we had this one already didn't we? 'Fuarach'? That's the way that they would say it here...

**Holliday:** 'Ok'. 'Fuar-lite'.

**MacLean:** 'Fualaid'.

There was no 'i' in it. There was no 'r' in it.

**Holliday:** Ok, and that is...more correct?

**MacLean:** Aye, I would say so.

**Holliday:** I would say so, certainly, indeed.

**MacLean:** 'Tha, da rìreabh'. Yes, indeed. 'Tha da rìreabh'.

**Holliday:** Yes...

**MacLean:** I took with me 'ultach' of anything at all, 'ultach'...or 'eallach', 'ultach' or 'eallach', it's pretty much the same...

**Holliday:** Load.

Instead of 'luchd'?

**MacLean:** Aye.

'Filleadh'.

**Holliday:** Oh right.

**MacLean:** 'Filleadh'. Put a 'filleadh' on something, put a hem or fold in it.

'Cuinneag'. There were different things which you could call a 'cuinneag' but it's a...wooden pail...

**Holliday:** What size?

**MacLean:** Oh, just sort of...maybe...it would fit about two gallons.

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**Holliday:** Oh, yes.

**MacLean:** Now, you would get ‘cuinneagan’ at the beach as well, where they would fish off the rocks there and they would...pound the sole...and over the years the hole would get deeper and deeper, and you’ve seen it yourself on those rocks there...

**Holliday:** Aye, I saw.

**MacLean:** That would be called a ‘cuinneag’ too.

**Holliday:** That’s a cuinneag too? ‘Toll-sòl’ (a sole hole).

**MacLean:** ‘Cuinneag’, aye, and another as well, where you would get, there are some here too, and where there was a beach you would get...in amongst the rocks you would get the water coming up, in a wee spout, but you wouldn’t see that if the tide was in, I never saw it happening on land, this thing, but there are enough places you would see that around Tìree, I can’t remember where they are today...most of them are east, the ones I knew anyway, and I know they are east...the water, it was as fresh as could be, there was no salt in it or anything...

**Holliday:** It wasn’t.

**MacLean:** It wasn’t.

**Holliday:** And that’s know as a ‘cuinneag’ too?

**MacLean:** ‘Cuinneag’.

**Holliday:** I understand.

**MacLean:** ‘Umpaidh’.

**Holliday:** ‘Umpaidh’.

**MacLean:** ‘Umpaidh’, aye, ‘umpaidh e!’ ‘Dunce, he’s a dunce!’

‘Oitir’ (headland). You know that one anyway.

‘Athadh’. It’s ‘abhagh’ that they would say here. ‘Abhagh.’ I don’t know why but ‘athath’ is the correct spelling anyway.

**Holliday:** What do you say here? ‘Abhagh.’

**MacLean:** ‘Abhagh’.

‘Aimsir (weather)’. My grandfather and the other old people, they would use that word much, much more often than ‘side’, as we would say, when we speak of it, but it’s ‘side’ that we speak of most often, but ‘aimsir’ is what they would speak of.

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**Holliday:** It is.

**MacLean:** ‘Aiteamh’ (thawing or making a bad situation worse)...more is the pity. ‘Loss’...  
\*indescipherable\*...

**Holliday:** I’ll take that too.

**MacLean:** Uhuh, ‘mòr am beud e’ (more is the pity), ‘loss’.

‘Càblaid’ (hindrance), ‘o nach ann a siud a bha càblaid’ (Oh, what a hindrance that was).

‘Adag’ (Haddock/hat/tip). You don’t hear this often now, ‘Eòghann Eàirdsdh’ in Cornaig, he is the ‘adagan.’

**Holliday:** I didn’t hear...

**MacLean:** ‘Ìotadh’. ‘Ìotadh’. Thirst. ‘Tha Ìotadh orm’ (I’m thirsty).

**Holliday:** That’s an old word.

**MacLean:** Yes, oh, ‘dais’, ‘daise’, they added the ‘e’ in here, ‘daise’, but it’s ‘dais’...

**Holliday:** Where would that be?

**MacLean:** In the barn.

**Holliday:** In the barn.

**MacLean:** It would be built up in the barn and it would...it would be made almost the same way that they would make hay ricks, it was treated in the same way that a hay rick was (oblong stack). Oh, ‘dais’ aye.

Oh ‘udalan’, ‘udalan’ (the swivel on a tether).

‘Bloinig’. Fat.

**Holliday:** And how was that used?

**MacLean:** ‘Bloinig’?

**Holliday:** ‘Duine bloinig’ (A fat man?)

**MacLean:** Well...you could use it like that but more commonly it referred to when they killed a sheep or similar and if there was a lot of fat on her, it’s ‘bloinig’ that they would call it...‘o nach ann air a’ bheothach tha sin a tha bloinig’ (Oh, that animal has a lot of fat on her.)  
‘Dallag’.

**Holliday:** Dog fish, uhuh.

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**MacLean:** ‘Bleith’, you don’t hear ‘bleith’ anymore either (grinding e.g corn into meal).

**Holliday:** You don’t! You don’t.

**MacLean:** ‘An-asgaidh’ (free). Buai...

Oh, aye. ‘Buaic’.

**Holliday:** ‘Buaic’.

**MacLean:** ‘Buaic’, wick.

**Holliday:** Wick. From a candle?

**MacLean:** Aye, yes. Aye, they would make them here too and...

**Holliday:** On a string?

**MacLean:** Aye, and an oil lamp would have a wick and they would use the core of rushes, they would peel the green back from the rushes and you were left with the middle.

**Holliday:** Pith.

**MacLean:** That’s it, the pith!

And, oh, ‘buaitean’ (the swiple of the flail, the part that threshes corn)...

**Holliday:** We’ve got that.

**MacLean:** ‘Mul. Mul-chlach’. You see it around Tìree here, you see the old ‘mhul’ but it was here for thousands of years, and you see it changing, it came...I would say....

**Holliday:** Miodar?

**MacLean:** Yes, in Miodar.

**Holliday:** Yes, and in Na Cùiltean (West Hynish) as well?

**MacLean:** As well, and that’s... ‘mul-chlach’.

**Holliday:** ‘Mul-?’

**MacLean:** ‘Mul-chlach’.

**Holliday:** ‘Mul-chlach’.

**MacLean:** ‘Mul-chlach’ (raised beach).

‘Cabhsair’. This was used for different things in Tìree, ‘cabhsair’ is where there would be, in a stable, where the animals would be on the two sides of the ‘bhàthaich’ and

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there was two furrows in the stable, and the ‘cabhsair’ would be between the two furrows, you can get around three feet in breadth, that was to take the barrow in between the two furrows.

**Holliday:** Tha mi a’ tuigsinn.

**MacLean:** ‘Cabhsair’ (walkway).

‘Caitcheann’.

**Holliday:** ‘Caitcheann’.

**MacLean:** ‘Caitcheann’. It’s nothing more than common grazing or common land, you know, you get it with most of the crofts, ‘caitcheann’, it could be on the machair or it could be on the sliabh, outside or away from the croft, and everyone had a share who had a croft around the area. ‘Caitcheann.’

‘Canach’.

**Holliday:** I’ve not heard that...

**MacLean:** I haven’t heard that since I was young, a porpoise, o yes, ‘canach’.

‘Sioman’...an old, old word that too, straw rope. ‘Sioman càmhlaich.’

**Holliday:** What is...‘canach an t-slèibh’?

**MacLean:** Oh, well that is...

**Holliday:** Something else?

**MacLean:** Aye, bog cotton. That’s what ‘canach an t-sleibh’ is.

**Holliday:** It’s one word.

**MacLean:** It’s one word.

**Holliday:** The same word, there is ‘canach an t-slèibh’ and ‘canach...muir (sea).’

**MacLean:** Aye, that’s it.

**Holliday:** I understand.

**MacLean:** ‘Caob’. You had that one.

**Holliday:** ‘Caob’.

**MacLean:** ‘Caob’, piece of cake or something like that.

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‘Caochladh’. ‘S iomadh caochladh a thig air an t-saoghal’ (many a change will come on this world). ‘Change’.

‘Toinneamh’. Twist.

Oh...‘caoin’...I thought it was c-r...c-a-o-i-n...

‘Caoin’. Yes...my writing, it’s awful, I can’t read it myself!

**Holliday:** It’s very good.

(laughter)

Does that say...it’s hay, it’s grass...

**MacLean:** Aye, well, seasoned...

**Holliday:** Old grass?

**MacLean:** Oh, well, new grass, when it’s cut it must be left so that some of the moisture comes out, so it grows soft ‘caoin.’

**Holliday:** That’s a good thing.

**MacLean:** Yes, yes, yes...

**Holliday:** I understand.

**MacLean:** ‘Cuach’. Wooden pail they say here.

**Holliday:** What kind of shape would the pail be, was it quite flat or...? It wasn’t a bucket?

**MacLean:** Yes, yes, but it would be made very easily – it didn’t come out in the same way that they make them today, like the pails today, it was just straight up and down, it was easier to make.

**Holliday:** It was.

**MacLean:** ‘Farmail’. That’s, eh, I can’t say for sure that I’ve ever seen a ‘farmail’...you could say it was a ‘ballan’ as well.

**Holliday:** Aye, is that for pee?

**MacLean:** ‘Farmail’, it would take about twenty...aye...

**Holliday:** Would you say that?

**MacLean:** It would take roughly twenty or twenty five gallons, or something like that.

**Holliday:** I understand.



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**MacLean:** ‘Calg’. You don’t hear that these days.

**Holliday:** You don’t!

**MacLean:** It would get caught in your clothes and you would be full of it too...

**Holliday:** It was uncomfortable?

**MacLean:** Aye. ‘Buarach’, cow-fetter, you’ve got that one, and you’ve got ‘langaid’ too.

**Holliday:** ‘Langaid’? What’s that, I’ve haven’t heard that.

**MacLean:** You haven’t?

**Holliday:** ‘Langaid’ (horse fetter)?

**MacLean:** It would go...in the stable...

\*pause in recording\*

**MacLean:** There was...\*indescipherable\*...there and there was a rope, a red rope I saw...the front foot and the back foot if the calf was standing just like that, it would be about that length, if he stood naturally, with rope on one side of him, his front foot and his back foot, he couldn’t run fast in it, they could hurt themselves in a clammer or in fences and the like. If that wasn’t put on them, when they would see the sun they would go crazy, that’s it.

**Holliday:** They would...

**MacLean:** Eh, ‘langaid’...isn’t that...oh, yes, here it is, ‘tàcharan’. It’s ‘tàchara’ that they would say here though.

**Holliday:** ‘Tàchara’.

**MacLean:** ‘Tàchara’, but also ‘tàcharan’ (changeling). Eh, they used here in like ‘nach e tàcharan grànna’, like that, it was a derogatory word, but a ‘tàcharan’ was...they believed in that kind of thing anyway, that the fairies would take away any child and put one of their own in it’s place. And, the last place on Tìree that such a thing happened, if you have cause to believe it, is over in Ruaig, in a croft...

**Holliday:** Roddy MacLeod?

**MacLean:** No, the croft belongs to Duncan’s Alasdair now, down on the sliabh, the Black Croft they call it. You know, the old road that goes from Broc, it goes straight down and you can get across the beach to Dùn Mòr? By the side of the...\*indescipherable\*..., going out to the sliabh? That’s the Black Croft.

And, there’s a story about it...\*indescipherable\*...anyway that a changeling was left while they were at the harvest...there was a man and his wife and they had a small infant, and they put the infant in the shade of some sheaves of corn, and they weren’t very far away and

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when they returned, there was a different creature all together instead of their infant, they didn't know what on earth...he wouldn't stop crying and he wouldn't eat a thing...there was an old man down around Broc, and he said to them, that's not your own baby but something that the fairies left, a changeling, but he told them that he could give them something, I can't remember what it was, and he said 'You'll go out to Soa Ruaig, and you'll find your own child beside a rock at 'Port Bealach na Ciste' (the inlet of the pass of the chest), in Soa, and they went there and got their very own baby back...they had something else to do as well for this one, to determine that it was a changeling, now, was it a 'clobha' or something that the man from Broc as them to put the changeling into the fire with...

**Holliday:** Tongs?

**MacLean:** Aye, when he seized the hot thing, it let out a scream and went up through the roof of the house.

(Laughter.)

**Holliday:** There were fairies in Cnòc Ille Chaluim, is that the place?

**MacLean:** I don't know...yes...there were lots of places in Tìree and there were fairy folk there...things that meant they were there, but I don't know. Maybe, maybe...

**Holliday:** 'Cachaileith'.

**MacLean:** 'Cachaileith'. There were enough of those in Tìree at one time...there was a 'cachaileith' between each township, and there was a 'cachaileith' between each croft and sliabh and it was...a 'cachaileith' was a special kind of gate, the gate had a pivot, and a great height, or it could have been eight feet in height, what a gate it was, it had this post, it went up high, high, and it had a stay put on it, up to this corner to keep it up.

**Holliday:** I understand. Between the croft and the sliabh? Or between the ùtraid (sideroad to common grazing) and the sliabh?

**MacLean:** It was a big stone with something like a 'cuinneag' in it, there was a post...pivot stone.

**Holliday:** Right.

**MacLean:** 'Ìotadh' (thirst), haven't we seen this one already?

**Holliday:** Aye.

**MacLean:** 'Ìotadh'.

'Camhanaich'. 'Anns a' chamhanaich 's tu g'eirigh' (you rise in the morning twilight), early morning.

**Holliday:** Mhm.

**MacLean:** 'A' chamhanaich'.

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‘Càth’. Winnow.

**Holliday:** I am ‘càthadh’, winnowing?

**MacLean:** Well, you could...well it’s...it’s, to be certain, it’s...it’s ‘càthadh’, but ‘càth’, that’s what chaff is. I have no idea how I got that.

‘Cath’, well, ‘cath’ or ‘cathadh’ again, that’s drifting snow.

‘Cathan’. Barnacle goose. ‘Cathan’.

**Holliday:** What geese, are there other names for the geese in Tìree? White fronted goose, and the other geese?

**MacLean:** The White front goose...oh...what...‘gèadh-glas’ is the big one anyway.

**Holliday:** It is.

**MacLean:** Greylag. It’s...yes, it was something to do with this white front but, eh, I can’t remember what it is, maybe it’ll come back to me.

**Holliday:** Aye, maybe.

‘Searbh’.

**MacLean:** ‘Searbh’ (bitter). Oh, didn’t we see that one too already, where then...

**Holliday:** You had that one already. Here it is, ‘dallanag’.

**MacLean:** Oh, ‘dallanag’.

**Holliday:** What’s that?

**MacLean:** Well, that’s, a hole in a...in a wall, on the inside of a stable, where they would put all sorts of things, keep all sorts of things so they wouldn’t be on the floor. Horse fetters, whatever else, pails or anything they had for milking or things like that, they would get put there where they were up out the way, not on the floor, and they were safe like that. And it’s a hole for a window...

**Holliday:** It is.

**MacLean:** It means a window hole.

**Holliday:** ‘Dallanag’.

**MacLean:** ‘Dallanag’. It was a blind-window.

‘Carbhanach’. You don’t hear this word anymore either. Bream.

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**Holliday:** Did the bream make good eating?

**MacLean:** They said that it did. But, there was bream fishing here and, it was out before ‘Sòthaigh Cholla’ (Soa Coll)...that place was especially good for bream. Och, that was gone before I was born, it was...

**Holliday:** ‘Còthaigh Cholla’, where is that?

**MacLean:** ‘Sòthaigh’.

**Holliday:** Oh, ‘Sòthaigh Cholla’.

**MacLean:** Aye, just out straight before ‘Shòthaigh Cholla’, it seems the ground there was good for bream.

‘Clàd’.

**Holliday:** I haven’t heard that... ‘clàd’...what tool would that be?

**MacLean:** Aye, it was like a hoe but it was big, you know, it was...there would be fifteen inches in it, maybe there was four to six inches of depth to it, and you could pull a great deal with it...it was great for snow too at the time, if they had a lot of snow...in this island...

**Holliday:** Pulling? Anything at all?

**MacLean:** Pulling, aye...

**Holliday:** ‘Clàd’.

**MacLean:** ‘Clàd’.

‘Caisleachan’. They say here ‘taslachan’. But ‘caslachan’ is the correct word. It’s a treadle.

‘Feòraich’. Inquire. You’ve got that one anyway, aye.

‘Ceap’, shoemakers last.

‘Gu suthainn’.

**Holliday:** ‘Suthainn’.

**MacLean:** ‘Gu suthainn’, ‘gu suthann’...

**Holliday:** ‘Forever more’.

**MacLean:** Aye. Perfect.

‘Clùd’.

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**Holliday:** ‘Clùd’.

**MacLean:** ‘Clùd’. There was a school master in Ruaig, oh, he was before my time anyway, you would see him ...\*indescipherable\*... he had a gown on, he had this cloth on, and when he got angry he would beat you, beat with his own cloth.

(Laughter)

Oh, maybe it wasn't a gown. But yes...maybe it wasn't a gown, maybe it was...aye, yes, I think it was a gown.

Eh, ‘Iuchair’. Well that's a key or the roe of fish.

**Holliday:** That's...it's ‘mealg’ too...female roe or male roe, what is...?

**MacLean:** ‘Mealg’, well it is...it's ‘realg’, it's not...it's roe that isn't mature. Do you know what I mean by that, it's not...the roe isn't mature, those wee things aren't in the roe, it's nothing but a slimey thing...

**Holliday:** So a ‘mealg’ is older than fish roe?

**MacLean:** It is.

**Holliday:** I understand, yes. Ok. ‘Stairsneach’.

**MacLean:** ‘Stairsnich’. Threshold. ‘Chan fhaigh thu far na stairsnich seo’ (you won't set foot over this threshold)!

**Holliday:** You won't!

(Laughter)

**MacLean:** What in the world is this, oh, aye, aye, ‘campar’.

**Holliday:** ‘Campar’.

**MacLean:** ‘Campar’. ‘Tha mi fo champar’. I am sorrowful. What's that song with ‘campar’? Bruthaichean Ghlinn Braoin...

*Gur e mis' tha sa champar, 's mi fo chis anns an àm seo,  
Ann am prìosan na Frainge fo ainneart 's gach aon...*

Yes, ‘campar’, aye...

‘Calcadh’.

**Holliday:** What stuff did they use for ‘calcadh’ (caulking)? A type of string or...?

**MacLean:** What's the name of it again? ‘Cainb’. Hemp.

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**Holliday:** O, right.

**MacLean:** ‘Cainb’, aye.

**Holliday:** ‘Cainb’.

**MacLean:** ‘Calcadh’.

‘Muing’. ‘Mhuing an eich’ (the horses mane). ‘Mane.’

‘Damhan-allaidh’!

**Holliday:** ‘Damman-allaidh’?

**MacLean:** Put ‘Damhan’. ‘D-a-m-h-a-n’.

**Holliday:** ‘Damhan’.

**MacLean:** ‘Damhan-allaidh’. Spider. ‘Lìon an damhan-allaidh’ – spider web.

I believe we’ve come to an end, haven’t we...

**Holliday:** That’s it! What do you say for mushroom?

**MacLean:** ‘Balg a losgainn’.

**Holliday:** ‘Balg’?

**MacLean:** ‘Balg a losgainn’.

**Holliday:** ‘Balg ‘a’ losgainn’.

**MacLean:** ‘Balg a losgainn’.

I’ve got enough too...of...

(Other voices and the cat mewing)

...it’s happened many times and you can be certain when I’m away from the house, a word will come to me and I won’t have a pen, I won’t have a pencil or anything to write it down on my hand. When I return home I won’t remember it anymore, it’s gone.

**Holliday:** It is.

**MacLean:** (Laughing.)

**Holliday:** Can I just, make a copy...?

**MacLean:** Certainly, anything. It would be easier to make out if you had a copy of that anyway!

**Holliday:** Ach, aye.

**MacLean:** \*neo-shoilleir\*...and I can only make out a bit of it!

(Laughter)

I have so many words if only they'd come back to me!

(Cat mewling.)

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- Tart (thirst)
- Lunndaire (an idle or lazy person)
- Malcadh (rotting, particularly wood)
- Glamradh (vice/wooden vice)
- Dòrlach (hand or fistful)
- Connlach (straw)
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- Geinn (wedge/large or thick piece of anything)
- Falman (kneecap)
- Imcheist (anxiety)
- Malairt (trade)
- Faidhir (fair)
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- Furas (patience)
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- Dis (prone to feeling the cold)
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- Mòr am beud e (what a pity or loss)
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- Adag (haddock/small hat/tip)
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- Dallag (dog fish)
- Bleith (grind)
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- Buaic (wick)
- Crùisgean Dubh (kind of oil lamp)
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- Clais (furrow)



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- Caitcheann (common grazing)
- Machair (low lying fertile plain)
- Sliabh (moor or boggy ground)
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- Canach an t-slèibh (bog cotton)
- Caob (piece of something, e.g piece of cake)
- Caochladh (change)
- Toinneamh (twist)
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