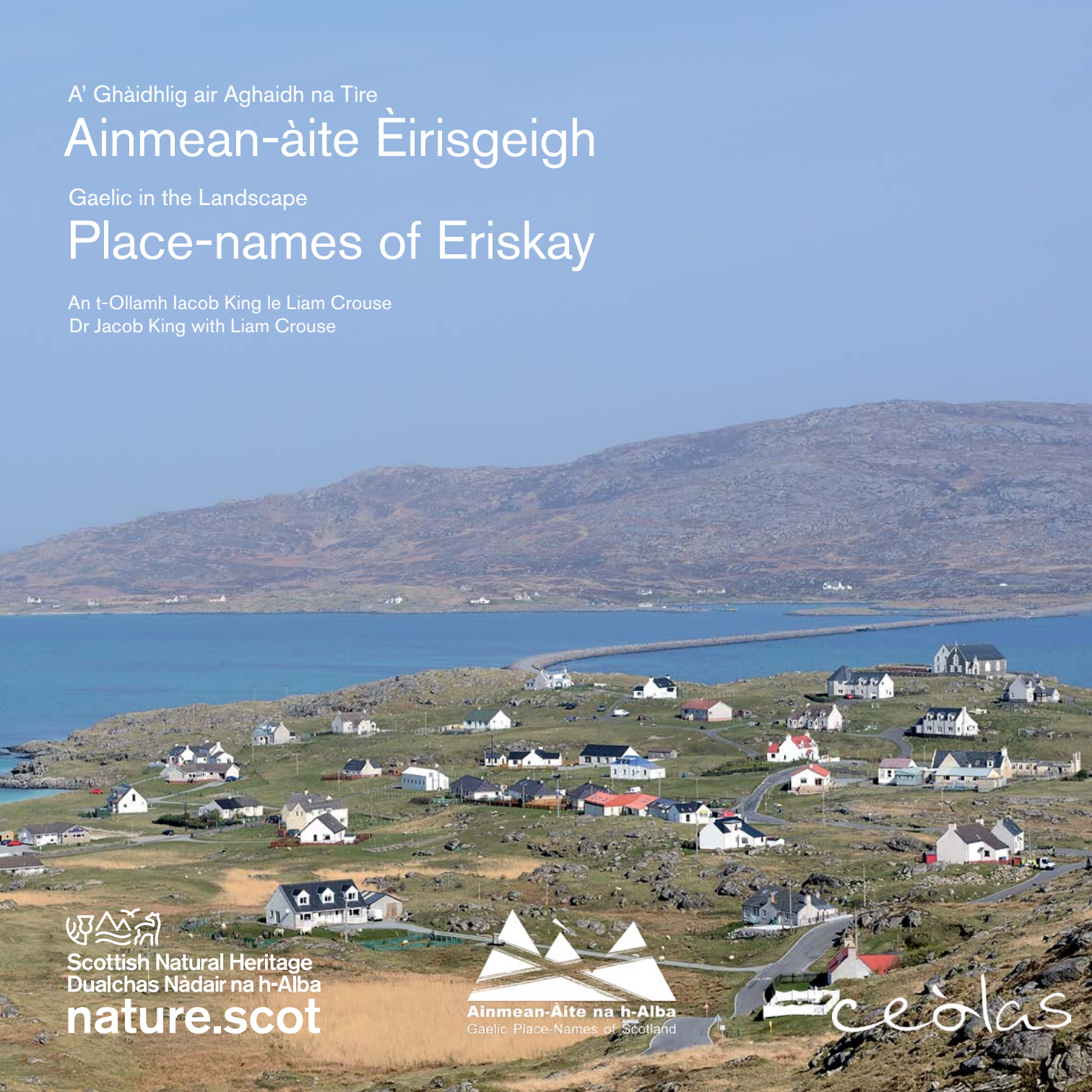
A' Ghàidhlig air Aghaidh na Tìre

Ainmean-àite Èirisgeigh

Gaelic in the Landscape

Place-names of Eriskay

An t-Ollamh Iacob King le Liam Crouse
Dr Jacob King with Liam Crouse



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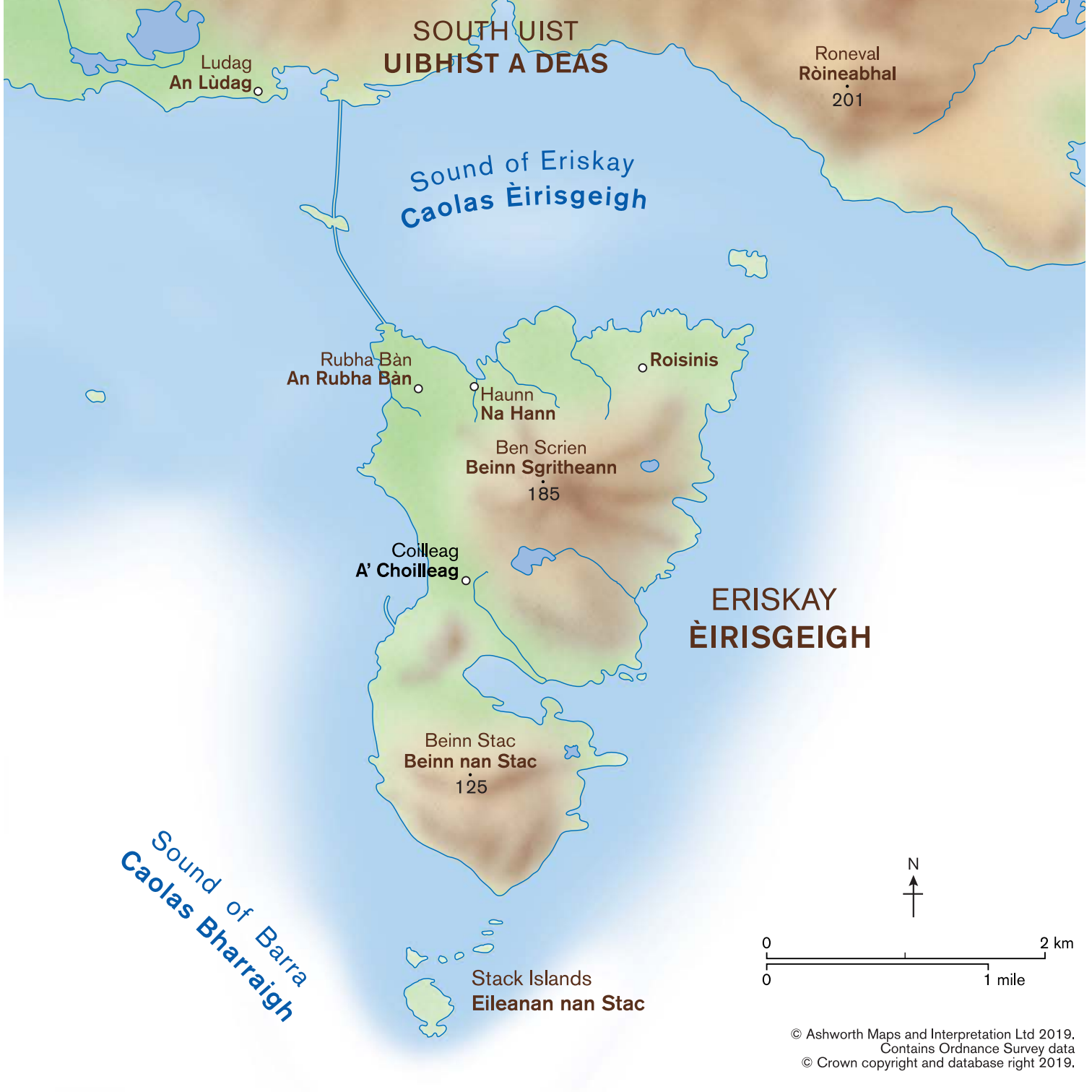

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A' Ghàidhlig air Aghaidh na Tìre

Ainmean-àite Èirisgeigh

Gaelic in the Landscape

Place-names of Eriskay

An t-Ollamh Iacob King le Liam Crouse
Dr Jacob King with Liam Crouse

Rubha a' Chlaidh

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Gaelic Place-Names of Scotland

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Deilbh / Design: Big Apple Graphics Ltd

Mapaichean / Maps: Ashworth Maps & Interpretation Ltd

Maoineachadh bho / Funded by: Scottish Natural Heritage

Taing do / Thanks to: Ceòlas, Comann Eachdraidh Èirisgeidh, Ramsay MacMahon, Dr J Decker Forrest, Eòina Wilson, Peigi Ann NicIlleMhaoil, Sandra MacInnes, Prof. Richard A. V. Cox

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Cover photograph: Rubha Ban

A' Ghàidhlig air Aghaidh na Tìre

Ainmean-àite Èirisgeigh

Gaelic in the Landscape

Place-names of Eriskay

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Ged a gheibhinn-sa mo thagha
B' e mo rogha dhen Eòrpa
Àite tuinidh an cois na tuinne
An Eilean grinn na h-Òige;
Lom e dhuilleach, lom e mhuran,
Lom e churrac eòrna,
Air a luimead gura lurach
Leamsa h-uile fòd dheth.

Earrann den dàn 'Eilein na h-Òige'
le Maighstir Ailein MacDhòmhnaill à
U. I. MacBhatair *Bàrdachd Ghàidhlig* (Sruighlea, 1932)
t.d. 1 agus *Eilein na h-Òige: The Poems of Fr Allan MacDonald*
deas. Raghnall MacIlleDhuibh (Glaschu, 2002) t.d. 172-3

Though I could take my pick of Europe
My choice would be
A dwelling-place beside the wave
In the elegant Isle of the Youth
Bare as it is of leafage, bare of marram grass
Bare of stooks of barley
For all its bareness,
Each clod of it is lovely to me.

Extract from 'Eilein na h-Òige'
by Fr Allan MacDonald from
W. J. Watson *Bàrdachd Ghàidhlig* (Stirling,1932)
p. 1 and *Eilein na h-Òige: The Poems of Fr Allan MacDonald*
ed. by Ronald Black (Glasgow, 2002) p. 172-3

Pònaidhean Èirisgeigh, beathaichean dùthchasach a tha ann an cunnart mòr, aig Sgor na Bèiste, Am Baile
Eriskay ponies, a critically endangered native breed, at Sgor na Bèiste, Baile

Ro-ràdh

Chaidh an leabhran seo a sgrìobhadh mar thoradh air pròiseact rannsachaidh air na h-ainmean-àite ann an Èirisgeigh nach eil cho aithnichte ri cuid de na h-ainmean eile. Chaidh mòran dhiubh a chruinneachadh le neach-rannsachaidh ann an 2018 a bha ag obair còmhla ri Gàidheil a bhuineas do na h-eileanan. Gheibhear lorg air a' mhòr-chuid de dh'ainmean-àite an leabhrain seo air mapa le bhith a' cur feum air na comharraidhean griod anns a' chlàr-amais far a bheil stiùireadh fuaimneachaidh cuideachd. Tha na h-ainmean nach eil co-ionnan ris na dreachan air mapaichean no nach bi a' nochdadh air mapaichean idir air an sònrachadh.

'S ann anns an naoidheamh linn a sgap na Lochlannaich air feadh a' Chuain a Tuath, bhon dachaigh ann an Nirribhidh gu ceann an iar-thuath na h-Alba, far an do thuinich iad ann an Èirisgeigh mar a rinn anns a' chòrr de na h-Eileanan an Iar.

Chan eil mòran fianais ann an eachdraidh Èirisgeigh mun linn seo; chan eil fhios againn cuin a chuir Lochlannach cas air tìr an toiseach anns an eilean no cò bh' ann romhpa no gu dè an cànan a bh' aca. Chan eil fianais sgrìobhte air Èirisgeigh gus an deach *Description of the Western Isles* le Monro a sgrìobhadh ann an 1549, far a bheil e a' nochdadh mar *Eriskay*. Chaidh ainmean nas sine air cuid a dh'eileanan Innse Gall a ghleidheadh ann an ainm ùr ach 's ann do linn nan Lochlannach a bhuineas an t-ainm Èirisgeigh. Tha e coltach gur e *Eriksøy* a bh' air bho thùs, a tha a' ciallachadh 'an t-eilean aig Erik' - 's e **Èirisgeigh** an dreach Gàidhlig a chuireadh air. Chaidh a' Ghàidhlig a stèidheachadh (no ath-stèidheachadh) mar chànan muinntir nan Eileanan an Iar mun treas linn deug agus chan eil e na iongnadh gur e ainmean Gàidhlig a th' ann an cuid mhòr de na h-ainmean Èirisgeach eile.

An Rubha Bàn
Rubha Ban

Introduction

This booklet is the result of a research project dealing with some of the lesser-known place-names of Eriskay. Many were gathered by a field worker during 2018 from Gaelic speakers native to the island. Most of the place-names in this booklet can be located on a map using the grid references in the index, which includes a rough pronunciation guide. Special note is taken of names that either differ from published maps or do not appear on maps at all.

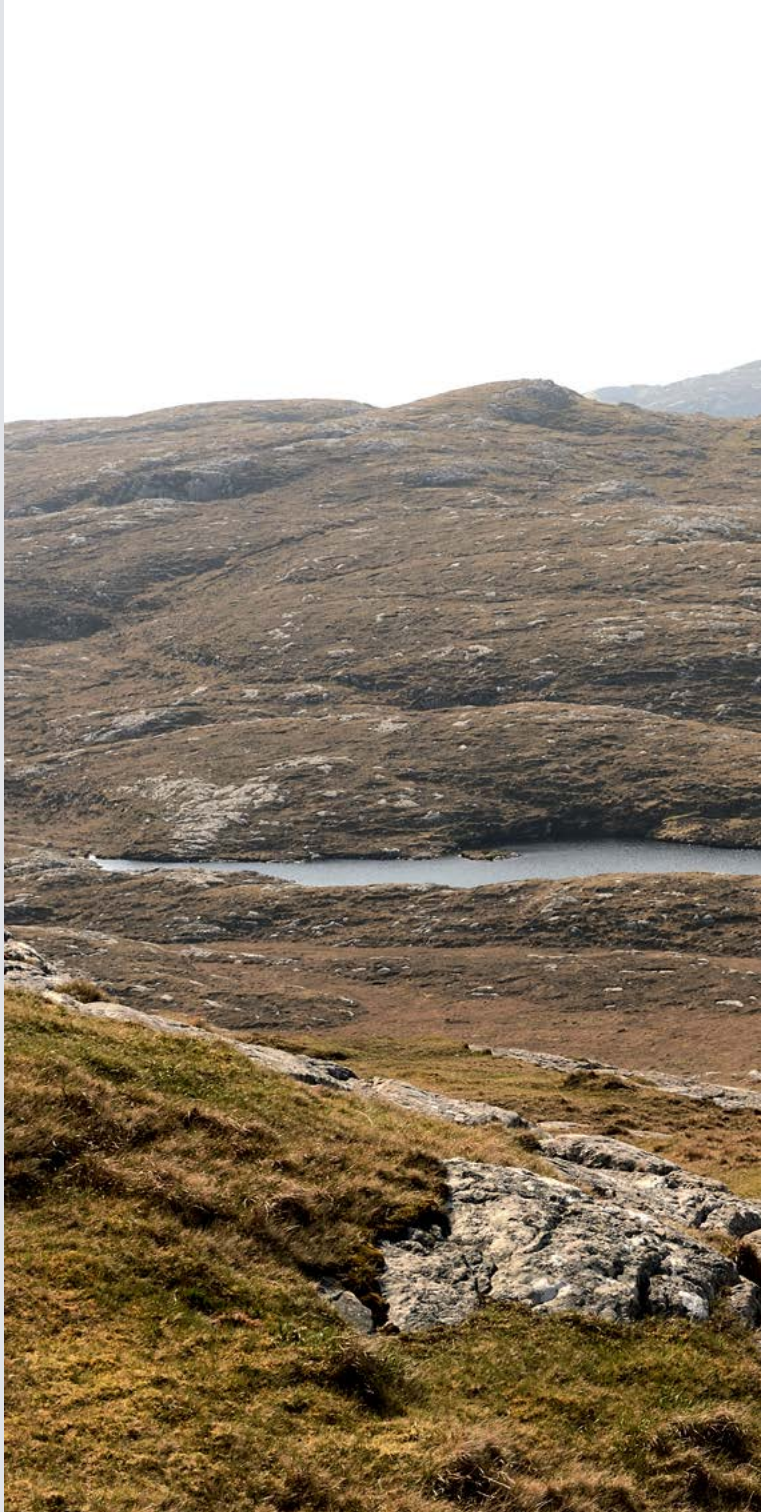
When, in the ninth century, the Vikings started to expand across the North Sea from Norway to the north-west seaboard of Scotland, they eventually settled in the Western Isles; Eriskay was no exception. We know very little about this period in Eriskay's history; unfortunately, facts such as when the first Vikings set foot on the island or who the original inhabitants were and what language they spoke are lost to history. There is no actual evidence of Eriskay in the historical record until Monro's *Description of the Western Isles* written in 1549, where it appears as *Eriskay*. In some places in the Western Isles, an older island name was preserved by the Vikings, but in the case of Eriskay the name, like many island names in the west of Scotland, only dates back to the Norse era. It most likely was *Eriksøy* meaning 'Eric's Isle', passing into Gaelic as **Èirisgeigh**. Gaelic asserted (or re-asserted) itself in the Western Isles from around the thirteenth century and it is therefore no surprise that there are many names of Gaelic origin in Eriskay as well.

Sgeir an Fhèidh

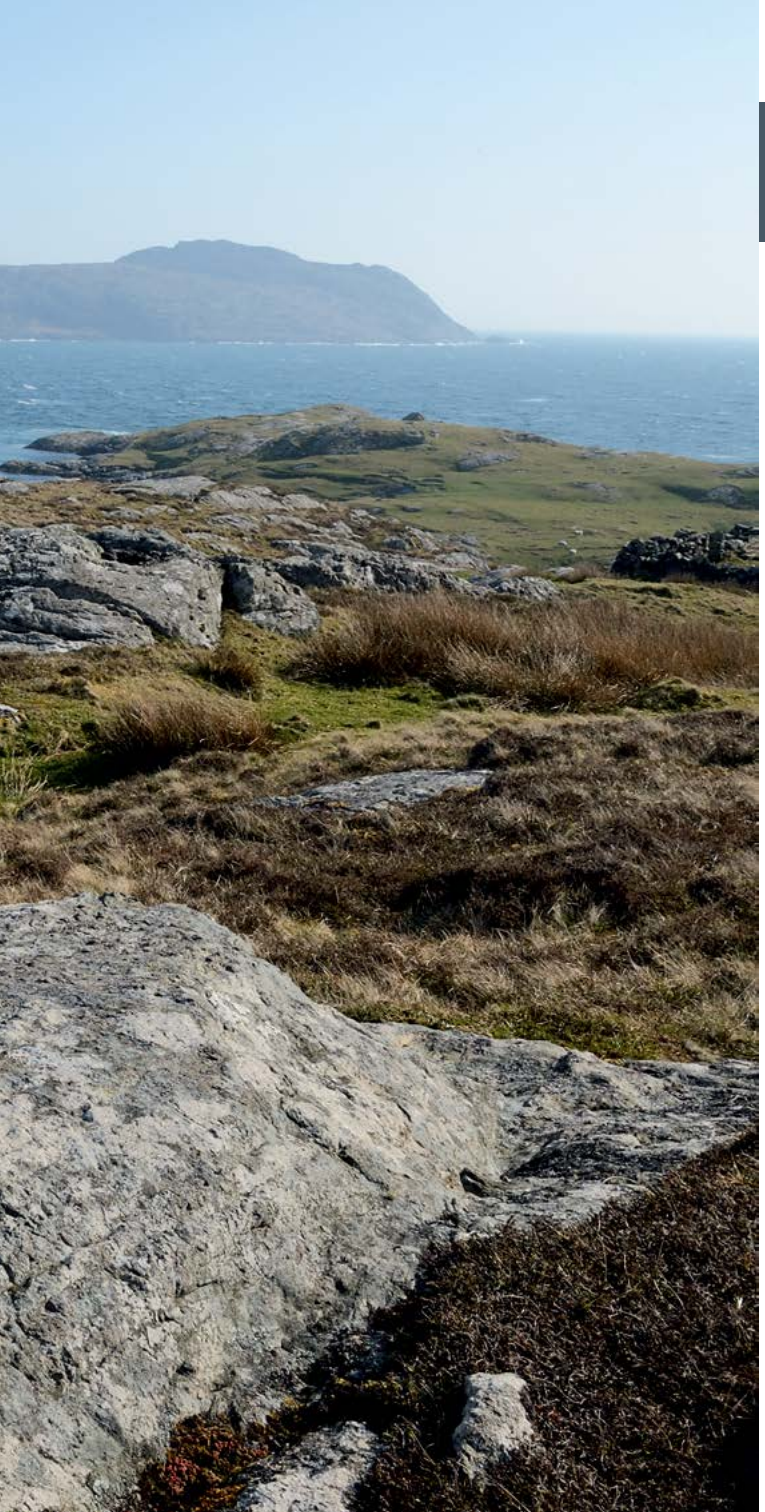
Ainmean Cladaich
Ainmean Lochlannach

’S e ainmean-àite Lochlannach a th’ anns a’ chuid as motha de na h-ainmean an cois cladaich, rubhannan, bàghan agus eileanan beaga ann an Èirisgeigh, mar a tha ann an grunn eileanan eile. ’S e ainmean-àite Lochlannach a th’ ann an **Roisinis**, **Heinis**, **Seisinis** agus **Rònais**; tha *-n(a)is* aig deireadh ainm a’ riochdachadh *nes* ‘rubha’ (mar a chithear ann an iomadh àite eile anns na h-eileanan, a leithid Nis ann an Leòdhas). A bharrachd air an eileamaid seo, tha e coltach gur e an eileamaid *hros* ‘each’ a tha aig toiseach an ainm Roisinis (tha àite eile air a bheil Roisinis ann am Beinn na Faoghla); ’s e *hey* ‘feur’ a th’ anns an ainm Heinis, (tha Haoidhnis ann an Tiriodh); tha an eileamaid *sev* ‘luachair’ anns an ainm Seisinis agus ’s e *hraun* ‘talamh garbh’ a’ chiad eileamaid ann an Rònais.

Tha dà bhàgh (no ma dh’fhaodte trì) ann an Èirisgeigh air a bheil no air an robh ainmean Lochlannach; tha am facal Lochlannach *vík* ‘bàgh’ anns gach fear dhiubh. ’S ann bhon t-seann Lochlannais *Cracavík* ‘bàgh na cromaig’ a tha an t-ainm **Cracabhaig**, air a bheil Beinn Cracabhaig agus Loch Cracabhaig stèidhte, agus ma dh’fhaodte gur e seo an t-ainm Lochlannach a bh’ air an Acarsaid Mhòir (tuilleadh mun a seo nas fhaide air adhart). Tha e coltach gur ann anns a’ ghleann an cois na mara mu thuath air Seisinis a bha Stulabhaig, a chithear anns an ainm **Gleann Stulabhaig** agus ma dh'fhaodte gu bheil e stèidhte air an Lochlannais *Stulavík* ‘bàgh Stulli’, agus *Stulli* mar ainm duine. Tha ainm eile air Loch Cracabhaig, ’s e sin **Loch Eòsa Bhig**.



Loch Cracabhaig,
air neo Loch Eòsa Bhig
Loch Cracabhaig



Coastal Names
Norse names

As is the case in other islands, the majority of the names for headlands, bays and islets in and around Eriskay have a Norse origin. **Roisinis**, **Heinis**, **Seisinis** and **Rònais** are all from Norse; the *-n(a)is* ending being from *nes* 'headland' (also seen in many places elsewhere in the islands, including Ness in Lewis). In addition to this element, Roisinis likely contains *hros* 'horse' (there is Roisinis on Benbecula); Heinis contains *hey* 'grass', (there is a Heynish on Tiree); Seisinis contains *sev* 'rushes' whilst Rònais contains the word *hraun* 'rough ground'.

Two (or maybe three) bays in Eriskay have or had Norse names at one time; they all contain the Norse word *vík* 'bay'. **Cracabhaig**, from Norse *Cracavík* 'crook bay', which now gives its name to Beinn Cracabhaig and Loch Cracabhaig, was probably once the Norse name for Acairseid Mhòr (discussed later). Stulabhaig, which now exists in the name **Gleann Stulabhaig** likely denoted the coastal hollow north of Seisinis, and may represent *Stulavík* 'Stulli's bay', where *Stulli* is a personal name. Another name for Loch Cracabhaig is **Loch Eòsa Bhig** 'Little Joseph's loch'. No tradition was recorded as to Little Joseph's identity. Could this have originally been a Norse *vík* name reanalysed into a Gaelic name?

Roisinis

Chan eil iomradh air Eòsa Beag fhèin anns an dualchas. An e ainm *vík* Lochlannais a bh' ann bho thùs mus deach riochd Gàidhlig a chur air?

Tha na h-ainmean **An Acarsaid** (sgrìobhte air mapaichean mar Acairseid) agus **An Acarsaid Mhòr** (sgrìobhte air mapaichean mar Acairseid Mhòr) suidhichte air an fhacal *akkeris-sæti* ann an Seann Lochlannais, a' ciallachadh 'àite-suidhe na h-acrach'. Chaidh am facal seo na fhacal Gàidhlig, ged as ann bhon t-Seann Lochlannais a thàinig e bho thùs, agus mar sin dheth feumaidh gun deach an dà Acarsaid ainmeachadh le Gàidheal seach Lochlannach. 'S ann air an fhacal Lochlannach *höfn* a tha **Na Hann** stèidhte agus e a' ciallachadh acarsaid shàbhailte, coltach ris an fhacal Bheurla 'haven'. 'S e mìneachadh air leth freagarrach a tha seo. Leis nach bi faclan Gàidhlig a' tòiseachadh le H-, chaidh an t-alt iolra 'Na' a chur ris an ainm gu nàdarra airson an fhuaim a ghleidheadh. Thachair an dearbh rud anns an ainm Na Hearadh a tha stèidhte air an fhacal Lochlannach *Herað* '(an) sgìre'.

Rubha Sheisinis agus Eilean Sheisinis
Rubha Sheisinis and Eilean Sheisinis

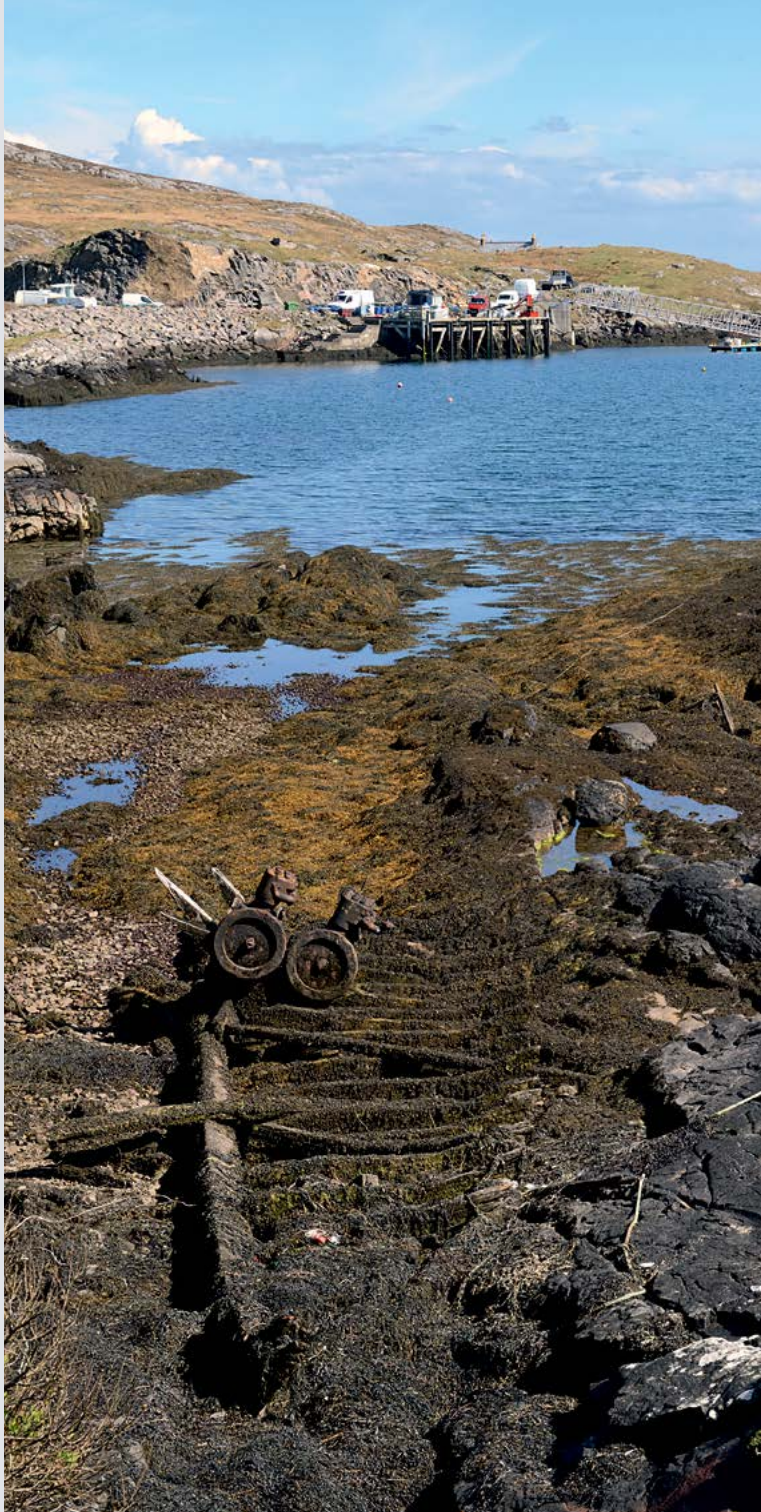
An Acarsaid ‘the anchorage’ (written Acairseid on the maps) and **An Acarsaid Mhòr** ‘the big anchorage’ (written Acairseid Mhòr on the maps) derive from an Old Norse word *akkeris-sæti,* meaning ‘anchorage’, literally ‘anchor seat’. This word passed fully into Gaelic however, despite being of a Norse origin, so Acairseid must have been coined by Gaelic speakers rather than Norse speakers. The Haunn or **Na Hann** is from Norse *höfn* denoting a safe anchorage, linked with the English word ‘haven’. This is an apt description. Because Gaelic does not natively have words beginning with H-, the plural definite article ‘Na’ was naturally added to the name to preserve the sound. The same thing occurred with Na Hearadh or Harris which is from Norse *Herað* ‘(the) district’.

An Acarsaid Mhòr
Acairseid Mhòr

Na Hann
The Haunn

Long-bhrisidhean

Tha cuid a dh'ainmean-àite nas ùire na an còrr – thèid an cruthachadh agus an dìochuimhneachadh mar a dh'atharraicheas muir is tìr agus mar a dh'atharraicheas cleachdadh na mara agus an fhearainn. Tha ceann-bliadhna cinnteach againn airson aon ainm-àite. Tha **Roc na Pollaidh** a' ciallachadh 'bogha an t-soithich ris an canar a' Phollaidh' agus tha an t-ainm sin ag innse sgeul cho ainmeil 's a tha an Alba. B' i 'a' Phollaidh' am far-ainm a bh' air an long *SS Politician*. Ann an 1941, bha i air a slighe eadar *Liverpool* agus *Jamaica*, nuair a bhuail i ann an Roc na Pollaidh. Cha deach duine a chall anns an sgrios gu fortanach ach chaidh dà fhichead mìle botal uisge-beatha a 'shàbhaladh' mus deach i fodha. Chaidh an sgeul innse anns an fhilm ainmeil *Whisky Galore*. 'S e Am Politician a th' air an taigh-seinnse ann an Èirisgeigh. Thàinig na seòladairean air tìr air rubha air a bheil **An Rubha Dubh** faisg air **Bogha an Rubha Dhuibh** ann an Uibhist a Deas. Chaidh cuid de na botail uisge-beatha fhalachadh air na geidsearan aig **Sgor na Bèiste** anns a' Bhaile nuair a bha iad a' sireadh a' charago.



Am 'Mystical Rose', seann bhàta-iasgaich Zulu
The 'Mystical Rose', an old Zulu fishing boat

Wreckages

Not all place-names are ancient – they are continually being created and forgotten as the land and sea change and as the usage of the land and sea changes too. One modern name can be dated exactly. **Roc na Pollaidh** means 'the submerged rock of the Polly' and tells a story which has entered into modern Scottish legend. 'The Polly' is the nickname for a ship, the SS Politician. In 1941 this was *en route* between Liverpool and Jamaica, when, during a gale, a wave caused it to hit a rock now called Roc na Pollaidh. Fortunately, the wreck did not result in loss of life, but forty thousand cases of Scotch Whisky were plundered before it sank. The events were immortalised in the film Whisky Galore. Today a public house in Eriskay called Am Politician is named after the ship. The sailors came ashore at **An Rubha Dubh** 'the black point' near **Bogha an Rubha Dhuibh** 'the reef of the black point' in South Uist. **Sgor na Bèiste** 'the rock of the beast' in Baile was one location where bottles of whisky were hidden from the gaugers when they came looking for the cargo.

An Rubha Dubh, faisg air Bogha an Rubha Dhuibh
Rubha Dubh, near Bogha an Rubha Dhuibh

Tha ainmean eile ann a tha co-cheangailte ri luing bhriste: **Càrn** no **Ceann a' Chliabhain**. 'S e 'cliabh bheag' no 'ciste' as ciall don fhacal *cliabhan* mar as àbhaist ach tha ciall eile air – 'soitheach briste'. Chan eil fhios aig muinntir an àite dè am bàta a bh' anns a' chliabhan. Thigeadh fiodh air tìr aig **Sloc a' Mhaide** nuair a shèideadh gèile bhon ear-dheas. A bharrachd air na maidean, thigeadh sprùilleach bho shoithichean, agus bha gu leòr dheth sin ann aig àm nan cogaidhean mòra. Tha àite le ainm annasach anns an Acarsaid Mhòir, **Port a' St Patrick**; chan eil e co-cheangailte ris an naomh ach ri bàta-iasgaich a bh' air a chumail an sin anns na 1920an.

Chan e seann ainm na h-eaglaise a th' ann an **Cidhe a' Chlèirich** ach ainm a tha co-cheangailte ri Ailig MacNeacail, no An Clèireach, mar a b' fheàrr a b' aithne e, a bhiodh a' stiùireadh bùth le Dòmhnall Fearghasdan anns Na Hann. 'S ann às a' chidhe an seo a rachadh An Clèireach anns an sgoth a-null do na bàtaichean mòra air acair faisg air Calbhaigh às an toireadh e bathar na bùtha. Tha **Cidhe an t-Sagairt** faisg air an àite seo a chaidh ainmeachadh air Maighstir Somhairle MacÌosaig a dh'eagraich an obair togail mar dòigh air cosnadh a thoirt do dhaoine anns na 1920an is 30an nuair a thàinig crìonadh air an eaconamaidh. Ach cha deach cuid den luchd-obrach a phàigheadh agus chaidh **Cidhe nan Convicts** a chur air, mar gur e prìosanaich seach luchd-obrach a bh' annta ag obair gun tuarastal. Chaidh an Seann Rathad dhan Acarsaid a thogail anns an aon dòigh.

Far a bheil Roc na Pollaidh fon uisge
Location of the submerged rock of the Polly

Other names relate to wreckage: **Càrn** or **Ceann a' Chliabhain** is either 'the cairn' or 'the headland of the wreckage'. *Cliabhan* normally means a 'chest' or 'basket' but may also mean 'wreckage'. What ship this refers to is not known, however. **Sloc a' Mhaide** or 'the pit of the wooden stick' is so called because in the old days when a gale from the south-east blew in, this depression would often fill up with timber and other materials. During the World Wars bits of wreckage from sunken ships would often be found here. Although not a wreckage, the odd sounding **Port a' St Patrick** 'the harbour of the St Patrick' is an alcove in Acairseid Mhòr; it does not relate to the saint but denotes a fishing boat called the St Patrick which was kept here in the 1920s.

Cidhe a' Chlèirich means 'the quay of the Clerk'. This is not an old ecclesiastical name, however, but relates to An Clèireach 'the Clerk', the nickname of Alec Nicholson who ran one of the shops in the Haunn, owned by Donald Ferguson. The quay here was Alec's landing spot from where he would sail out in his skiff to the larger boats anchored near Calbhaigh to bring groceries back for the shop. Nearby is **Cidhe an t-Sagairt** 'the quay of the priest' named for Fr Sorley MacIsaac who arranged for it to be built as a means of providing work for people during the depression in the 1920s and 30s. However, some of those workers were never paid and the quay was sometimes referred to disparagingly as **Cidhe nan Convicts** 'the quay of the convicts' as if the workers were convicts rather than employees. The Old Road to Acairseid was built in a similar fashion.

Sloc a' Mhaide

Iasgach

’S e gnìomhachas cudromach a th’ anns an iasgach ann an Èirisgeigh ach ma dh’fhaodte nas cudromaiche an seo na eileanan eile leis nach eil doimhneachd sam bith anns an talamh. Chithear seo, mar a bhiodh dùil, anns na h-ainmean-àite. ’S e iasgach nas traidiseanta a tha a’ nochdadh anns na h-ainmean anns an roinn seo seach an t-iasgach coimeirsealta a bhios a’ dol fada bhon chladach. Tha uisgeachan far a bheil iasgach math a’ nochdadh ann an cuid de na h-ainmean-àite, a leithid **Glumag Dhòmhnaill Bhàin**. ’S e àite iasgaich sa mhuir as ciall don fhacal *glumag* ann an Èirisgeigh cho math ri poll ann an abhainn. Tha Dòmhnall Bàn a’ nochdadh ann an dà àite eile ann an Roisinis: **Cnoc Dhòmhnaill Bhàin** agus **Taigh Dhòmhnaill Bhàin**.

Chithear ann an ainmean-àite eile àiteachan far am biodh daoine ri creagach: ’s e creag iasgaich as ciall don fhacal *carraig* mar as ciall ann an àiteachan eile. Tha eisimpleirean ann an **Carraig an Eilein** agus **A’ Charraig Dhomhain**. Tha ainm Uibhisteach a’ nochdadh ann an **Carraig Chisholm**. Bha an t-iasgach math aig **Carraig Iain** anns an Acarsaid, ach chaidh an cidhe a thogail os a cionn bhon uair sin.

Carraig Iain

Fishing

Like any island community, fishing is an important activity in Eriskay, possibly more so than on other islands because of the shallow depth of the soil. As one would expect, this is reflected in the place-names. The type of fishing referred to in this section is generally the less intensive type of inshore fishing, as opposed to the more commercial fishing which takes place away from the coast. Some place-names highlight the bodies of water which have good fishing. One such place is **Glumag Dhòmhnaill Bhàin** 'Blond Donald's little pool.' *Glumag* in Eriskay can be a term for a salt-water fishing spot, as well as a fishing pool on a river.

Creag Cuibhle

Glumag Dhòmhnaill Bhàin

Tha *glac* no *glaic* a' ciallachadh lagan no sloc anns an talamh air feadh na Gàidhealtachd. Ach tha ciall eile air an fhacal ann an Èirisgeigh, 's e sin àite cumhang mun chladach, coltach ri *geodha* no *geo* ann an eileanan eile. 'S ann faisg air an Rubha Bhàn a tha **Glaic nam Muirsgean**. Tha **A' Ghlaic Mhòr** ri lorg aig bonn Bheinn nan Stac eadar Meall Aoineart agus Meall nan Caorach. Tha eisimpleirean den fhacal *glaic* air ais bhon chladach rim faicinn nas fhaide air adhart san leabhar.

'S e creag iasgaich eile a th' ann an **Creag Cuibhle** aig Rubha Sheisinis. 'S e bearradh àrd a th' innte far an cuireadh daoine an t-slat mhòr gu feum airson driamlach a shiabadh sa mhuir. Bhathar ri creagach mar seo nuair a bhiodh droch shìde ann air sàillibh 's gun cumadh e daoine na b' fhaide air falbh bhon mhuir fhèin. Rachadh liùghannan agus cudaigean a ghlacadh mar seo.

Glaic nam Muirsgean

Dòmhnall Bàn gives his name to two other features in Roisinis: **Cnoc Dhòmhnaill Bhàin** and **Taigh Dhòmhnaill Bhàin**, the 'hill' and 'house' of Blond Donald.

Other names denote spots where people can fish from: as in other places, *carraig* denotes such a fishing rock. Examples are **Carraig an Eilein** 'fishing rock of the island' and **A' Charraig Dhomhain** 'the deep fishing rock'. **Carraig Chisholm** denotes a Uist surname. **Carraig Iain** 'Iain's fishing rock' in Acairseid had good fishing, but the pier has been built over it.

Throughout the Highlands *glac* or *glaic* in place-names denotes a small hollow in the ground. In Eriskay however it can also be applied to small defiles in the coast, much like the word *geodha* or *geo* in other parts of the Western Isles. **Glaic nam Muirsgean** 'the defile of the razor fish' is near Rhuban. At the foot of Beinn Stac between Meall Ainort and Meall nan Caorach is **A' Ghlaic Mhòr** 'the big defile'. Further inland examples of *glaic* are given later on.

Creag Cuibhle 'wheel crag' at Rubha Sheisinis is another fishing rock. It is a very tall cliff and people would use the *slat mhòr* or 'large rod' to get a line into the sea. In this way fishing could be done when the weather was bad, because it kept one further away from the sea itself. Pollock and cuddies were caught in this way.

Carraig an Eilein agus A' Charraig Dhomhain
Carraig an Eilein and A' Charraig Dhomhain

Sgeirean

Is ma dh'fhaodte gur ann aig **Roc Druim Ghioghaigh** a gheibhear a' chiad sealladh air Druim Ghioghaigh, mar chomharra-stiùiridh do sheòladairean ag innse dhaibh gun robh a' chreag ann. Tha Gioghaigh no Giogha a' nochdadh grunn tursan air taobh an iar na h-Alba mar ainm eilein – 's e Giogha eadar Diùra agus Cinn Tìre am fear as ainmeile dhiubh ach tha Gioghaigh eile ann gu deas air Èirisgeigh aig ceann a tuath eilean Bharraigh. Ged a tha mòran den bheachd gu bheil ceangal ann leis an fhacal *Guð* 'Dia' ann an Seann Lochlannais, tha e nas coltaiche gur e ainm pearsanta Lochlannach a th' ann an *Gyð*, is e a' ciallachadh *Gyðøy* 'an t-eilean aig Gyða'.

'S e eileamaid chumanta a th' ann an *sgeir* a chithear an cois na mara agus i a' ciallachadh, mar as àbhaist, creag bheag anns a' mhuir a tha ceangailte ris no faisg air a' chladach. 'S ann air an tràigh anns a' Choilleig a tha **Sgeir na h-Àirigh Samhraidh**. Cha rachadh àirigh a chur gu feum gu mìosan an t-samhraidh nuair a bhiodh na caoraich agus beathaichean eile ag ionaltradh an sin. Tha dà ainm air an sgeir aig **Bàgh na h-Aibhne Duibhe**, 's iad sin **An Sgeir Mhòr** agus **Sgeir na h-Aibhne Duibhe**.

Sgeir na h-Àirigh Samhraidh

Skerries

Roc Druim Ghioghaigh means 'the rock of the ridge of Gioghaidh'. This possibly denotes the place from where Druim Ghioghaigh was visible, and was thus a marker to alert sailors of the existence of the rock. Gioghaigh as an island name appears several times in the west of Scotland, most famously in Gigha near Jura, but also in the name of an island due south of Eriskay at the northern end of Barra. Although often said to be from Norse *Guð* 'God' it is more likely to be the Norse personal name *Gyð*, thus *Gyðøy* 'Gyða's isle'.

Sgeir is a very common element in coastal environments and generally denotes a small rock coming out of the sea either attached to or close to the coast. **Sgeir na h-Àirigh Samhraidh** 'the skerry of the summer shieling' is a rock on the beach in Coilleag. A shieling was a hut used only in the summer when the sheep and possibly other

Sgala an Fhaing

’S ma dh’fhaodte gu bheil an t-ainm **Sgeir an t-Salainn** air mì-chinnt adhbharachadh oir chan e salainn a tha a’ còmhdachadh na sgeir ach salachar-eòin – cnap mòr de dh’innear nan eun mara!

Tha am facal *stac* a’ ciallachadh colbh de chreig a tha stobte anns a’ mhuir. Tha grunnan dhiubh rin lorg aig ceann a deas Èirisgeigh. Tha **An t-Eilean Leathann** (a chithear nas fhaide air adhart) seachad air agus ceangailte ris tha **An Stac Àrd** air a bheil caisteal a chaidh a thogail le fear air an robh Am Breabadair (thèid seo a mhìneachadh nas fhaide air adhart). ’S e **Caisteal an Reubadair** a tha sgrìobhte air mapaichean agus ’s e sin a th’ aig cuid a mhuinntir an eilein ach ’s e **Caisteal a’ Bhreabadair** an t-ainm as cumanta agus ’s e sin a tha sgrìobhte air cuid de na seann mhapaichean. Tha dà chreag air taobh an ear nan eilean seo air a bheil **A’ Ghèireag** a thathar a’ tuigsinn mar ‘a’ chreag gheur’ ach a dh’fhaodadh a bhith na h-ainm Lochlannach. Agus tha **Bogha Ruairidh** beagan mu thuath air a’ chreig sin.

Caisteal a’ Bhreabadair air An Stac Àrd
Caisteal an Reubadair on An Stac

Tha iomadh creag, sgeir is eilean beag eadar ceann a tuath an eilein agus Uibhist a Deas. 'S e ainmean Lochlannach a th' air na h-eileanan as motha anns an iar-thuath: is 's ann bhon Lochlannais *sker* 'sgeir' le eileamaid mhì-chinnteach a thàinig **Othaisgeir** (sgrìobhte mar Hoisgeir no uaireannan mar H-Òigh-Sgeir air mapaichean). Ach 's e ainmean Gàidhlig a th' air na sgeirean is creagan nas bige, a leithid **Ceann an Ròin**, mar thoradh air a cumadh, no **Bogha Mhic an t-Saoir**. 'S math dh'fhaodte gun tàinig an t-ainm seo gu bith air sàillibh 's gun robh còir aig an teaghlach sin feamainn a bhuan an seo no gun do bhuail cuideigin air an robh an t-ainm anns a' bhogha.

Tha a' Ghàidhlig air feum a dhèanamh den fhacal iasaid bhon Bheurla *rock* is e a' ciallachadh 'creag mara', gu h-àraid creag fon t-sàl. Chaidh Roc na Pollaidh ainmeachadh na bu thràithe. Tha Roc na Làir ann cuideachd a tha a' comharrachadh còrr is ceud meatair de dhoimhneachd air a chùlaibh.

Ged a bhios am facal *sgala* 'creag àrd no bearradh' a' nochdadh ann an àiteachan eile, tha iad nas pailte air cladach an iar Èirisgeigh na àite sam bith eile. Tha **Sgala Mhòr Roisinis** ann air a bheil ainm eile **Na Sgalachan Mòra** agus anns a bheil clach-tharraingeach a bhios a' cur chombaistean trullainn agus a th' air iomadh soitheach a thoirt às an rathad (agus ma dh'fhaodte am Politician nam measg). Chithear am facal ann an ainmean air falbh bhon chladach cuideachd. 'S ann aig **Sgala nam Breug** a bhiodh daoine a' coinneachadh airson an cuid naidheachd a ghabhail – mas d' fhiach a creidsinn!

Othaisgeir
Hoisgeir

PASSING
PLACE

livestock would be out to pasture. **An Sgeir Mhòr** in **Bàgh na h-Aibhne Duibhe** is also known as **Sgeir na h-Aibhne Duibhe** 'the skerry of Abhainn Dubh' which flows into the bay here.

The name **Sgeir an t-Salainn** might cause confusion as it means 'the skerry of the salt'. However, the rock is not actually covered in salt but in guano - an accumulated pile of bird droppings!

The word *stac* in place-names denotes a 'pillar' or 'cylindrical rock', normally jutting out of the sea. Eriskay boasts several at its southern end. Beyond **An t-Eilean Leathann** (discussed later) and attached to it by a small strip of land is The Stack or **An Stac Àrd** 'the high stack' upon which stands the castle built by a man called Am Breabadair 'The Weaver' (discussed later on). On the map it is called **Caisteal an Reubadair** 'the castle of the pirate' and is understood as such by many islanders. Normally, however, it is referred to as **Caisteal a' Bhreabadair** 'the Weaver's Castle'. Some old maps refer to it as this. To the east of these isles are two rocks: **A' Ghèireag** is understood to mean 'the sharp one' but may be of Norse origin. A little to the north of this is **Bogha Ruairidh** 'Rory's sunken rock'.

There are also numerous sea rocks and islets at the north end of the island between the north coast and South Uist. Starting in the north west, the larger isles have names of Norse origin: **Othaisgeir** (written on the maps as Hoisgeir or even H-Òigh-Sgeir) is from Norse *sker* 'skerry' with an uncertain first element. The smaller skerries and rocks have Gaelic names however, such as **Ceann an Ròin** 'the seal's head' due to its appearance, or **Bogha Mhic an t-Saoir** 'MacIntyre's sunken rock'. This name could have come about because the family had a right to cut seaweed here, or simply because someone with this name ran into it.

The English word *rock* has been borrowed into Gaelic as *roc* to denote a 'sea rock', often a sunken one. Roc na Pollaidh was mentioned earlier. There is also **Roc na Làir** 'the rock of the mare' which marks an area of great depth beyond it, over one hundred metres.

Although not unique to Eriskay, the term *sgala* 'cliff' or 'bluff' appears more on the island's west coast than anywhere else. **Sgala Mhòr Roisinis** 'the big cliff of Roisinis' is also known as **Na Sgalachan Mòra** 'the big cliffs'. It contains magnetic rock which disrupts compasses and has grounded many vessels (including possibly the Politician). The word can also appear in place-names inland. **Sgala nam Breug** 'bluff of lies' refers to a crossroads where people would meet for news - presumably not successfully!

Eileanan agus Oitirean

Tha am facal *oitir* a' nochdadh grunn tursan ann an Èirisgeigh; 's i **An Oitir Mhòr** an tè as motha agus as aithnichte dhiubh. 'S ann gu deas air Èirisgeigh taobh Ghioghaigh a tha **Bùidh na h-Oitireach** far a bheil bùidh no puta mòr buidhe a' comharrachadh oitir fon t-sàl a tha na cunnart do shoithichean. 'S ann aig **Oitir an Leisgein**, agus 'leisgean' a' ciallachadh duine leisg, a thigeadh iasgairean aig nach robh de chridhe a dhol a-mach cho fada às Na Hann. Tha oitir faisg air eilean Chalbhaigh a tha a' sìneadh air ais a dh'ionnsaigh Roisinis air a bheil **Banca Chalbhaigh**.

Tha sreath de dh'eileanan beaga mu cheann a deas Èirisgeigh a tha sgrìobhte air mapaichean mar **Na Stacanan Dubha**. 'S e **Eileanan nan Stac** no **Na h-Eileanan Beaga** a th' orra ann an Gàidhlig Èirisgeigh. Tha **Eilean a' Gheòidh** agus **An t-Eilean Dubh** nam measg. 'S e *na* seach *nan* a their muinntir an eilein, mar sin dheth, 's e **Eileanan na Stac** a chluinnear an Èirisgeigh an àite Eileanan nan Stac.

'S ann aig deireadh an t-sreatha seo de dh'eileanan beaga a tha **An t-Eilean Leathann**. Ma dh'fhaodte gur ann bhon Lochlannais *lyngøy* 'eilean fraoich' a tha **Lingeigh**; tha Lingeigh eile ann gu deas air Barraigh. 'S ann bhon Lochlannais *grænholm* 'dail uaine' a tha **Grianamul**. 'S e as ciall do *holm* ach eilean beag feurach ann an loch no faisg air eilean nas motha.

Am Baile agus An Rubha Bàn
Baile and Rubha Ban

Isles and Sandbanks

Oitir 'sandbank' appears a number of times in Eriskay; **An Oitir Mhòr** 'the big sandbank' is the biggest and best-known. Due south of Eriskay, towards Gioghaigh, is **Bùidh na h-Oitireach** 'the buoy of the sandbank', where a large yellow buoy marks an underwater sandbank which is dangerous to boats. **Oitir an Leisgein** 'the sandbank of the lazy man' was a fishing location for less adventurous fishermen who did not care to venture far out of the Haunn. The sandbank off the island of Calbhaigh stretching towards Roisinis is called simply **Banca Chalbhaigh** 'the Calbhaigh sandbank'.

At the southern end of Eriskay there are a series of islets referred to on the map as Stack Islands or **Na Stacanan Dubha** 'the black stacks'. In Gaelic they are called **Eileanan nan Stac** 'the islands of the stacks' or **Na h-Eileanan Beaga** 'the small islands'. Among them are **Eilean a' Gheòidh** 'the isle of the goose or creek' and **An t-Eilean Dubh** 'the black isle'. Locally *nan* 'of the (plural)' is pronounced *na*, thus Eileanan nan Stac is pronounced **Eileanan na Stac**.

Lingeigh

’S e facal iasaid eile bhon Bheurla a th’ ann am *banca* is e a’ ciallachadh banca ionmhais mar as àbhaist. Ach a bharrachd air a’ chiall sin, tha brìgh eile ann an Èirisgeigh, ‘banca iasgaich’ no ‘oitir’, mar a chithear ann am **Banca a’ Bhaile**. ’S e Am Baile an t-ainm a th’ air baile faisg air làimh.

Tha dà eilean beag fon chabhsair eadar Èirisgeigh agus Uibhist a Deas thar Chaolas Èirisgeigh. ’S e **An t-Easgann** a th’ air aon dhiubh; agus **Na Brùchdannan** air an fhear eile; chan eil a’ chiall an seo soilleir ach ma dh’fhaodte gu bheil ceangal ann leis an fhacal *brùchd* ‘cnap de dh’fheamainn a chuireadh gu tìr an dèidh stoirme’. Mar sin, ma dh’fhaodte gur ann an seo a thigeadh feamainn air tìr. Bha àite ann far a bheil an cabhsair a’ tòiseachadh faisg air An Lùdag air an robh **An Corra-linn** ‘caolas beag’. Dh’fhàgadh na h-eathraichean An Lùdag nuair a thigeadh stoirm bhon iar-dheas. Gheàrr an cabhsair troimhe nuair a chaidh a thogail. Tha pailteas chreagan is sgeirean air taobh an iar a’ chabhsair.

Tha am facal *banca* a’ nochdadh ann an dà ainm eile an seo: ’s e **Banca an Rubha Bhàin** a th’ air an oitir mhòir mun ear air an **An Rubha Bhàn**. Chaidh am baile air a bheil **An Rubha Bàn** ainmeachadh air an rubha seo cuideachd. ’S ann air rubha eile a tha am *banca* air ainmeachadh: **Banca Rubha Bun a’ Mhuilinn**. ’S ann beagan mu dheas air a’ bhanca seo a tha **Bun a’ Mhuilinn** agus mun iar air seo tha **Sgeir a’ Bhanca** anns a bheil am banca a’ nochdadh.

Coilleag a’ Phrionnsa agus Eilean na Coilleig
Coilleag a’ Phrionnsa and Coilleag

At the end of the chain of islets is a larger isle called **An t-Eilean Leathann** 'the wide island'. **Lingeigh** is probably Norse *lyngøy* 'heather island'; there is another Lingay to the south of Barra. **Grianamul** is from Norse *grænholm* 'green holm'. A holm is a small grassy island in a loch or near another larger island.

Along with *roc*, the word *banca* in Gaelic is a loan word from English, normally relating to a bank in the sense of a financial institution. In Eriskay, however, it has also been borrowed with the sense of a 'fishing bank' or 'sandbank'. **Banca a' Bhaile** is 'the bank of Am Baile', a nearby settlement.

The causeway which crosses Caolas Èirisgeigh from the island to South Uist goes over two islets. One is called **An t-Easgann** 'the eel'; the other **Na Brùchdannan**; the meaning of this is not clear but may relate to the word *brùchd* 'a pile of seaweed washed ashore in a storm'. This islet may have been a place where seaweed was washed ashore. Where the causeway meets South Uist near Ludag there used to be a place called **An Corra-linn** 'the small channel'. Here boats would make their way out of Ludag when there was a storm from the south-west. It was bisected when the causeway was built.

An Corra-linn

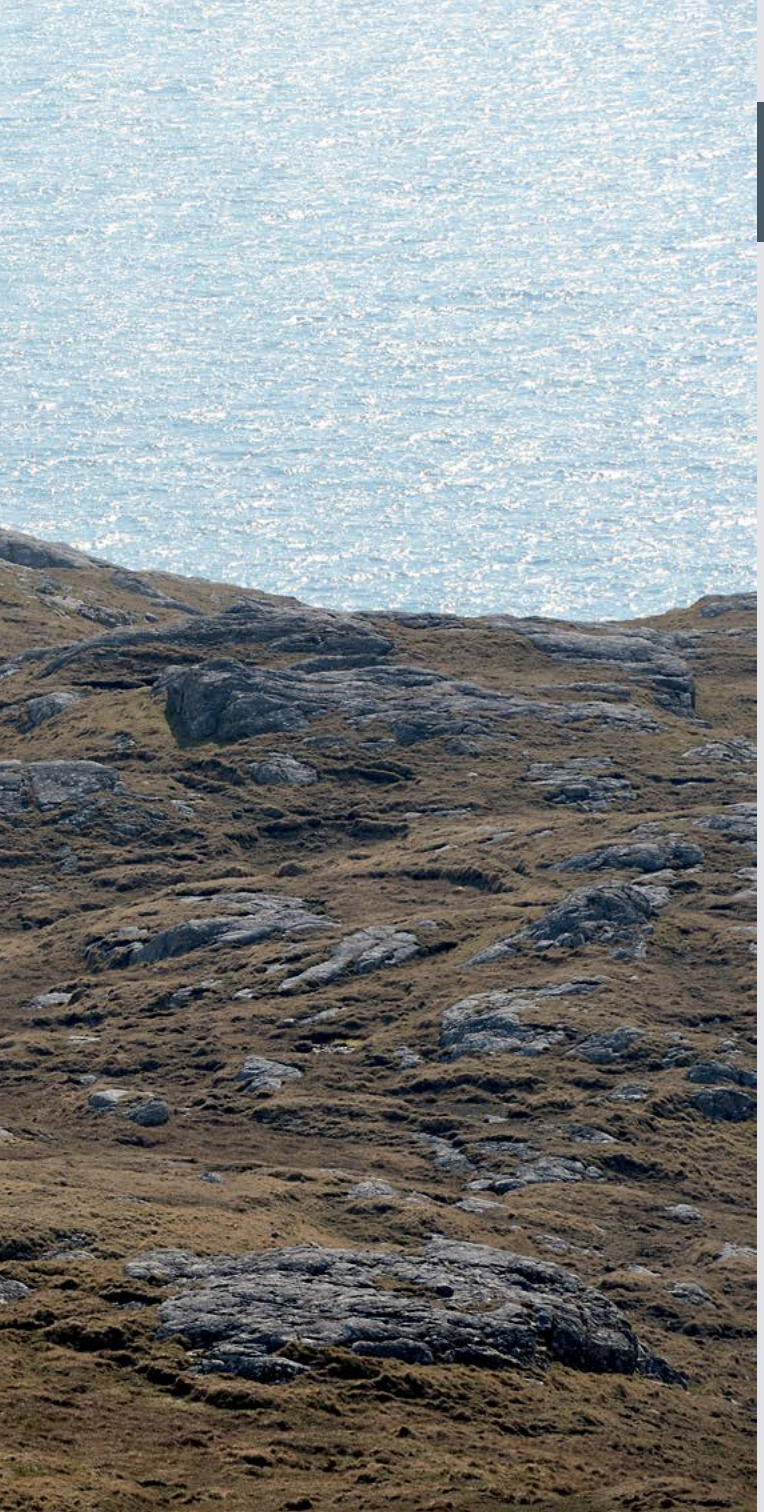
Thug am Prionnsa Teàrlach Stiùbhart buaidh air ainmean anns gach àite air an do thadhail e an Alba, agus Èirisgeigh nam measg. Mar a bhios fios aig mòran, thàinig e air tìr aig **Coilleag a' Phrionnsa**, ged nach bi iomadh Èirisgeach a' cleachdadh an ainm sin. 'S e 'dùn gainmhich' no 'cnoc beag' as ciall don fhacal *coilleag*. 'S e **A' Choilleag** ainm a' bhaile seo agus an tràigh mar phàirt den bhaile. Tha **Eilean na Coilleig** faisg air a' bhaile. Tha ciall eile air *coilleag*, 's e sin 'cruach mònadh' no seòrsa de mhaorach, ach 's e 'srùban' am facal Èirisgeach air sin. 'S e 'dùin ghainmhich' as ciall don fhacal *coilleag* an seo far a bheil am facal freagarrach do chruth na tìre, mar ann an Uibhist a Deas. 'S e **An Tràigh Leis** a th' aig cuid a mhuinntir an àite air Coilleag a' Phrionnsa; chan eil e soilleir dè as ciall do *leis* an seo. 'S ma dh'fhaodte gu bheil e iomchaidh gur ann an seo a tha an t-ionad aiseig. 'S e **An Càrn** a chante ris an àite far a bheil an raon-chàraichean, ri taobh **Ceann a' Ghàrraidh**, ged a chaidh **An Càrn** fhèin a sgrios nuair a chaidh an raon-chàraichean a dhèanamh.

Eileanan nan Stac

To the east of the causeway are numerous rocks and skerries.

Two more instances of the word *banca* appear in this area: the large sandbank extending east from An Rubha Bàn is **Banca an Rubha Bhàin** 'the bank of the place called An Rubha Bàn'. **An Rubha Bàn** itself means 'the white promontory'. It also gives its name to the settlement called Rhuban in English. The other *banca* in the area is also coined from the nearest coastal feature: **Banca Rubha Bun a' Mhuilinn** means 'the bank of the promontory of Bun a' Mhuilinn'. **Bun a' Mhuilinn** or 'the foot of the mill' is an area of land just to the south. **Sgeir a' Bhanca** to the west is 'the skerry of the bank' and refers to this sandbank.

Bonnie Prince Charlie left his mark on the place-name nomenclature everywhere he set foot in Scotland, and Eriskay is no exception. He famously landed at **Coilleag a' Phrionnsa** 'the sand dune of the prince', although this name is not used by many in the island. **A' Choilleag** is the name of the crofting township here, which includes the beach. Nearby is **Eilean na Coilleig** 'the island of the sand dune'. In place-names, *coilleag* can mean a 'sand dune' or 'small hill'. It can also mean a 'stack of peats' or 'cockle' (shellfish) but the latter is not true of Eriskay, where *srùban* is preferred. Our *coilleag* probably denotes 'sand dunes' which is topographically appropriate, and is also the meaning found in South Uist. Coilleag a' Phrionnsa is more commonly known as **An Tràigh Leis**; it is not clear what *leis* means here. Given that this is the landing-place of Bonnie Prince Charlie, it is perhaps fitting that the ferry terminal is nearby. The site of the ferry car-park is called **An Càrn** 'the Cairn', next to **Ceann a' Ghàrraidh** 'the head of the dyke', although An Càrn itself was destroyed during the car park's construction.



Rubhannan

’S e *rubha* am facal as cumanta an seo agus anns a’ chòrr den Ghàidhealtachd airson raon talmhainn a tha a’ stobadh a-mach chun na mara. Chan eil *àird* ri lorg ann an Èirisgeigh ged a tha am facal cumanta ann an àiteachan eile. ’S e **An Rubha Bàn** as aithnichte ach tha feadhainn eile ann cuideachd. Tha **Rubha nam Bàsadairean** ann (agus **Gob Rubha nam Bàsadairean**). A rèir a’ mhìneachaidh a chuir Maighstir Ailein MacDhòmhnaill an cèill, ’s e a th’ ann am *bàsadair* ach ‘toll an talamh-toll is uisge fodha’. Thigeadh muinntir an eilein chun an àite seo agus àiteachan eile airson mòine a bhuain (faic **Sluic na Mònadh**) agus bheireadh iad a’ mhòine air ais air a’ bhàta. An dèidh a’ mhòine a bhuain, bhiodh am poll-mònadh a’ lìonadh le uisge nach gabhadh traoghadh agus bhiodh caoraich a’ bàthadh ann. Mar a thuigear bhon ainm, ’s e àite fliuch, bog a th’ ann am **Bogach**. ’S e An Rubha Liath a th’ air an rubha mu dheas air Beinn nan Stac, a rèir nam mapaichean. Ach ’s e an t-ainm iomchaidh **An Rubha Mòr** a bh’ aig an neach às an eilean a chùm fiosrachadh dhuinne.

Chaidh **Rubha Iain Roisinis** ainmeachadh air fear a bha a’ fuireach ann am Bun a’ Mhuilinn o chionn leth-cheud bliadhna. Chaidh taigh comhairle a thogail aig **Rubha Fraoich** (no uaireannan Rubha Fhraoich).

Rubha nam Bàsadairean
Rubha Basadearn

Promontories

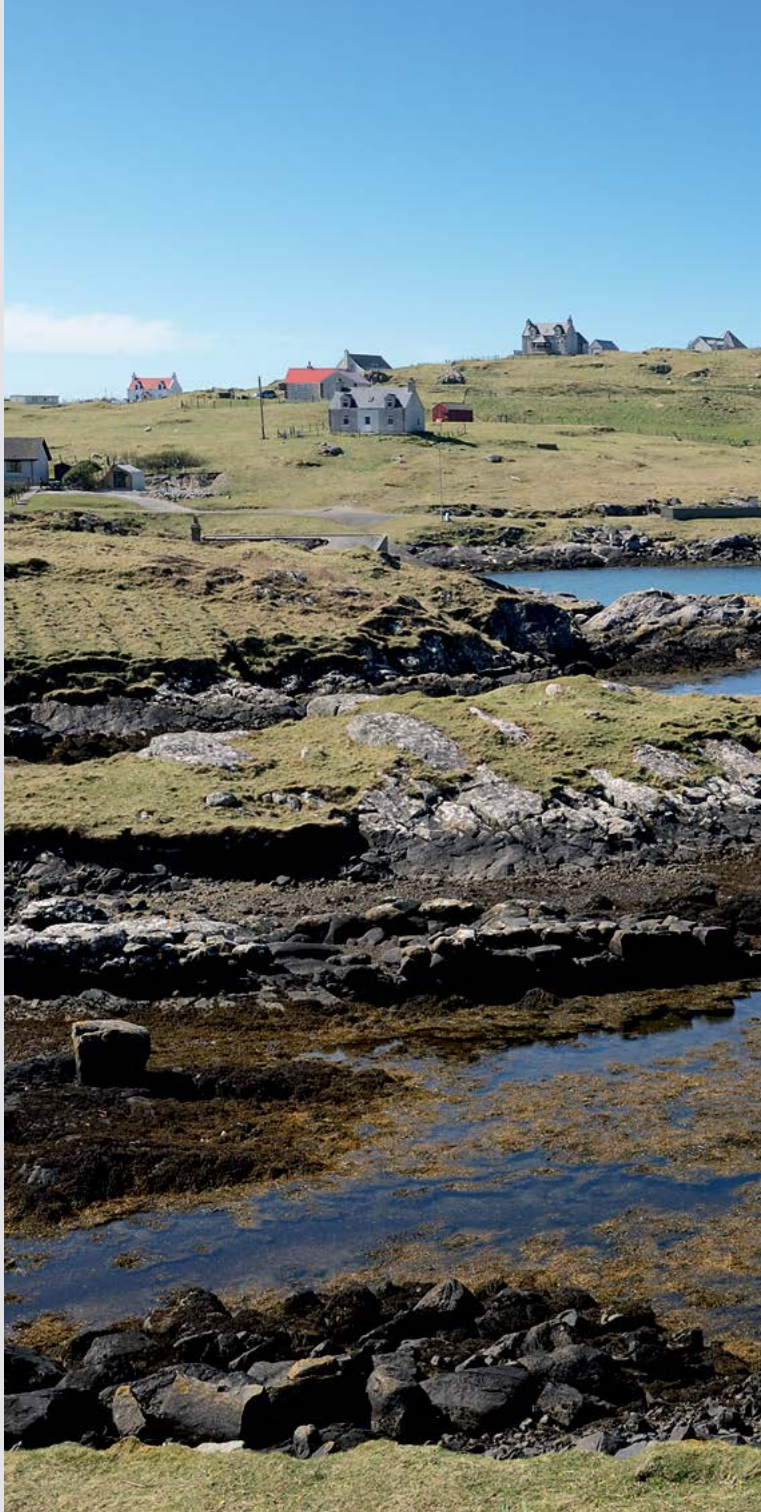
As elsewhere in the Highlands *rubha* is the default term for a promontory sticking out into the ocean. *Àird* 'height' which is popular elsewhere, is not used in Eriskay. Rhuban or An Rubha Bàn (mentioned earlier) is probably the best known, but a number of others exist. **Rubha nam Bàsadairean** 'the promontory of the sinking bogs' (and **Gob Rubha nam Bàsadairean**) was, as it sounds, full of sinking bogs. *Bàsadair* was defined by Fr Allan MacDonald as 'a hole in soft ground, covered by moss, with water underneath'. When the people from the island went to dig peat moss, they would come here and to other places (see **Sluic na Mònadh** later) and bring back the peat by boat. The peat mud is filled with water and sheep occasionally drown in it. Similarly, **Bogach**, as it sounds, is a wet place. When the peat was cut the holes would fill with water and would not drain. The large promontory jutting eastwards from Beinn Stac is seen on maps as Rubha Liath. Our informant however had never heard of that name, instead calling it **An Rubha Mòr** 'the large promontory', a fitting name.

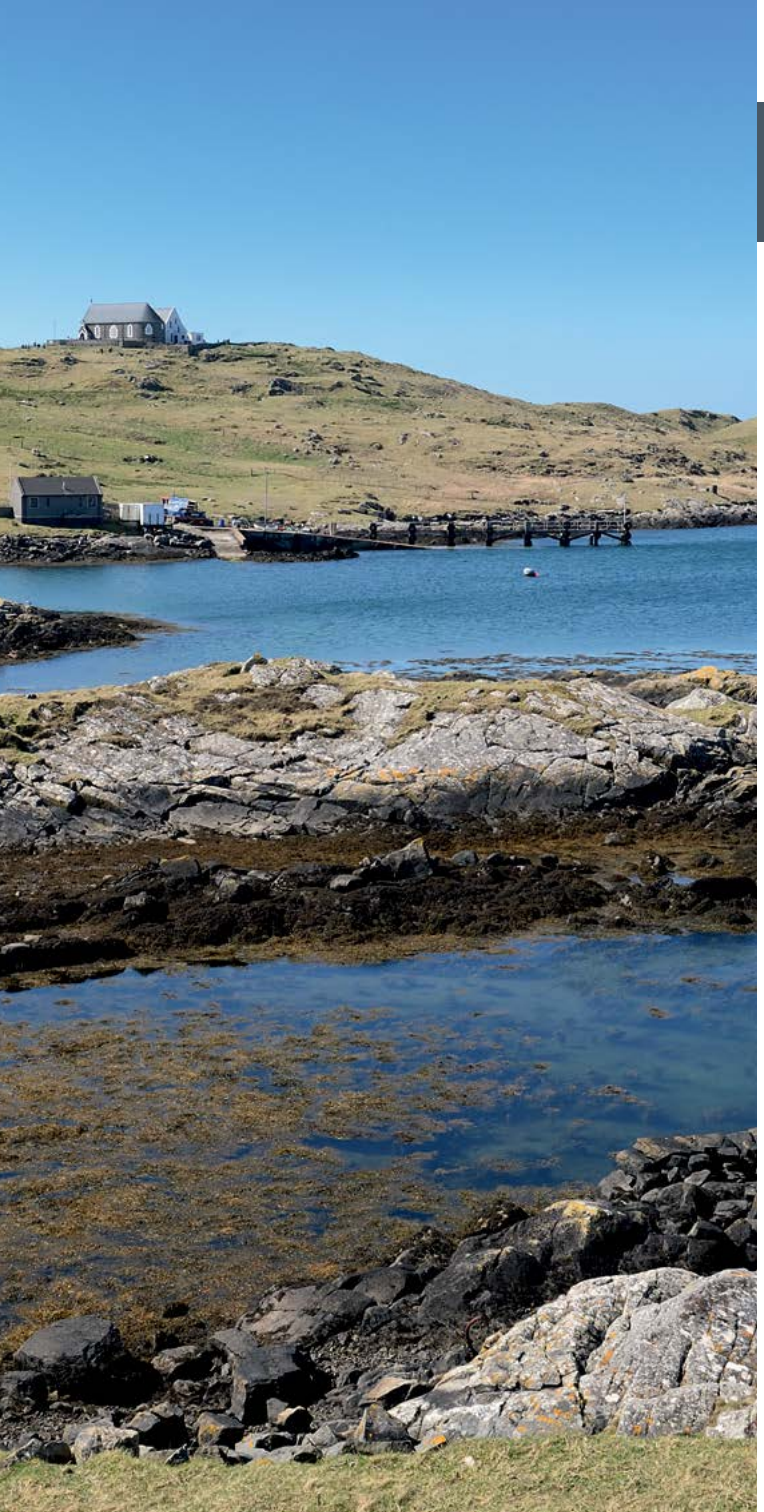
Rubha Iain Roisinis or 'the promontory of Iain Roisinis' (i.e. Iain from Roisinis) was coined for a man who lived in Bun a' Mhuilinn around half a century ago. **Rubha Fraoich** 'heather promontory' (also referred to as Rubha Fhraoich) is now the site of council houses.

Rubha Fraoich

Calachan agus Acarsaidean

Tha am facal *port* a' ciallachadh, mar as àbhaist, acarsaid a tha nas lugha na *port* anns a' Bheurla. Tha port anns Na Hann ris an cante **An Ruadh-Phort**; air sàillibh 's gur e sin dath na criadha an seo far am biodh na bàtaichean a' tiormachadh air tìr. 'S ann mun ear air seo ann an Roisinis a tha **Fionnphort**; tha ainm eile air a' phort seo, 's e sin **Port Chaluim Mhòir**. 'S e ainmean nan daoine no nan teaghlaichean a chuireadh na puirt gu feum a th' air na puirt. Tha dà phort anns Na Hann, 's iad **Port Aonghais mhic Mhurchaidh** agus **Port Dhùghaill Eachainn**, far am facas bòcan bho àm gu àm. Tha iomadh port eile ann cuideachd, a leithid **Port 'ic Iain Òig** agus **Port an Tàilleir** os cionn T**aigh Dhòmhnaill Iain 'ic an Tàilleir** anns an Acarsaid Mhòir. 'S e seo an taigh a tha a' nochdadh aig toiseach an fhilm le Werner Kissling ann an 1935, '*Eriskay: A Poem of Remote Lives*'.





Harbours and Anchorages

The term *port* in Gaelic generally represents a smaller anchorage than that defined by the English word. In the Haunn, one port is called **An Ruadh-Phort** 'the brown port' (*ruadh* locally denotes a brownish red colour); this was so called because of the colour of the clay here where the boats used to dry out. To the east in Roisinis is **Fionnphort** 'white port'; this is also known as **Port Chaluim Mhòir** 'Big Calum's port'. Many other small harbourages were named after the people or families that once used them. In the Haunn there are two ports, **Port Aonghais mhic Mhurchaidh** 'Angus son of Murdo's port' and **Port Dhùghaill Eachainn** 'Dougal son of Hector's port', where a ghost would be seen from time to time. There are many others, including **Port 'ic Iain Òig** 'Young Ian's son's port' and **Port an Tàilleir** 'the tailor's port', above **Taigh Dhòmhnaill Iain 'ic an Tàilleir**. 'the house of Donald John, the tailor's son' in Acairseid Mhòr. This is a house which appears early on in the 1935 film by Werner Kissling called 'Eriskay: A Poem of Remote Lives'.

Port Chlann Dhòmhnaill, neo Port Aonghais mhic Mhurchaidh agus Port Dhùghaill Eachainn
Port Chlann Dhòmhnaill, or Port Aonghais mhic Mhurchaidh and Port Dhùghaill Eachainn

Meadhan an eilein
Feartan togte

Bidh ainmean ag atharrachadh agus a' gluasad fad an t-siubhail. Tha cuid a dh'ainmean glè shean ach feumaidh sinn cuimhneachadh gum bi cuid a' tighinn beò is a' faighinn bàs leis na daoine a dh'ainmich iad. Tha deagh eisimpleir den atharrachadh seo ri fhaicinn anns Na Hann far a bheil craobh giuthais. B' i seo an aon chraoibh ann an Èirisgeigh gus o chionn ghoirid agus chaidh a cur o chionn ceud bliadhna le Maighstir Ailein MacDhòmhnaill. 'S e **Craobh Netty** a th' oirre a-nis is i air ainmeachadh air Netty a dh'eug ann an 2010. Bidh a h-uile ginealach a' cur ainm fhèin air a' chraoibh. B' e **Craobh Dhùghaill Eachainn** a bh' oirre aig aon àm; bha **Craobh Ann** agus **Craobh mo Sheanar** oirre cuideachd, ainmichte air daoine a bha a' fuireach faisg air a' chraoibh no leis an robh an talamh anns a bheil i.

Tha taigh anns a' Bhaile air an robh grunn ainmean eadar-dhealaichte cuideachd a leithid **Taigh Lizzie** agus **Taigh Fairy**. Tha a' chiad ainm co-cheangailte ri Lizzie Hendrick, agus an dàrna ainm ris an duine aice, Aonghas MacIlleMhaoil, ris an cante 'Fairy'. 'S e *Ben Scrien Cottage* a th' air an taigh a-nis. Chaidh **Taigh an Tairbh** ainmeachadh air Calum an Tairbh a dh'fhalbhadh a Loch Baghasdail a dh'fhaighinn tarbh bhon a' *Department*. 'S e **Taigh nam Bòcan** a chante ri seann taigh anns a bheil bòcan no taibhse. Tha cuid a dhaoine den bheachd gun tachair rudeigin mì-thaitneach anns an taigh seo fhathast air sàillibh 's gu bheil e suidhichte faisg air leathad cas agus gum faicear bòcain gu tric ro thubaistean.

'S ann don linn mus deach na cruitean a roinn agus ro àm nam Fuadaichean a bhuineas **A' Bhuaile Ghlas**, a bha na h-àite ionaltraidh do na caoraich aig Clann Raghnaill. Chan e Sgeir an t-Salainn (a chunnacas na bu thràithe) an t-aon ainm meallta ann an Èirisgeigh. 'S e crèadh seach òr a bha ri lorg ann an **Cuaraidh an Òir** ged a bhiodh i a' deàrrsadh mar an t-òr. 'S ma dh'fhaodte gur e gneiss Leòdhasach no *iron pyrite*, air a bheil *fool's gold* sa Bheurla, a tha anns a' chrèadh an seo.

Tha ceuman agus rathaidean uabhasach cudromach do mhac-an-duine agus 's e ainmean soilleir, sìmplidh a bhios orra mar as àbhaist: **An Ceum Cas** ann an **Gleann an Fhir Mhòir** air am biodh daoine a' sioftadh chaorach. Agus 's e **An Rathad Àrd** a th' air an t-seann rathad tro Bhun a' Mhuilinn, an coimeas ris an rathad nas ùire nas fhaisge air a' chladach.

Craobh Netty

Inland names
Manmade features

Naming is not static. Whilst some names are very old, it should be remembered that many names are born and die, living brief unrecorded lives. A good example of rapid name change is a spruce in the Haunn. Until recently, this was the only tree in Eriskay and was planted by Fr Allan MacDonald a century ago. It is currently called **Craobh Netty** 'Netty's tree' after Netty who died in 2010. The name of the tree changes however with each generation. In the recent past it has been called **Craobh Dhùghaill Eachainn** 'Dougal Hector's tree'; **Craobh Ann** 'Ann's tree' and **Craobh mo Sheanar** 'my grandad's tree', named after people who lived near or owned the land on which the tree stands.

Likewise, one house in Baile has had several names including **Taigh Lizzie** and **Taigh Fairy**. The former relates to Lizzie Hendrick, while the latter recalls her husband, Angus MacMillan, whose nickname was 'Fairy'. The house is now called Ben Scrien Cottage. **Taigh an Tairbh** is known in English as 'The Bull's House', and is coined for **Calum an Tairbh** 'Calum of the bull', who went to Lochboisdale to get a bull from the Board of Agriculture. **Taigh nam Bòcan** 'the house of the ghosts' is the name of a ruined house which is haunted. Due to the precarious location of the site near a steep slope and as ghosts are generally seen to precede accidents, some residents believe a future misfortune may occur near this spot.

The name **A' Bhuaile Ghlas** 'the grey fold' dates from before the time of the clearances when it was used by Clan Ranald as a grazing area for sheep. Sgeir an t-Salainn (mentioned earlier) is not the only name relating to deceptive images. **Cuaraidh an Òir** 'the quarry of the gold' actually contained clay, but shone as if it contained gold. Possibly it contains Lewisian gneiss or iron pyrite, more commonly known as fool's gold.

Paths and roads are an important part of human life and tend to have functional names: **An Ceum Cas** 'the steep path' in **Gleann an Fhir Mhòir** 'the glen of the big man' was used for moving sheep. Likewise **An Rathad Àrd** 'the high road' is the name given to the old road which goes through Bun a' Mhuilinn, as opposed to the newer road closer to the coast.

Aibhnichean

’S e sruth mòr uisge as ciall don fhacal *abhainn* air tìr-mòr na h-Alba agus sruth nas lugha as brìgh don fhacal *allt*. Ach ann an cuid de na h-eileanan beaga, canar abhainn ri allt air sàillibh ’s nach eil aibhnichean mòra ann; mar a chanar ann an Èirisgeigh. Mar sin dheth, ’s e uillt a th’ anns na h-aibhnichean a leanas: **Abhainn nam Pàirceannan** a tha a’ sruthadh tro Na Pàirceannan. ’S e facal iasaid bhon Bheurla Ghallda a th’ ann am *pàirc* ach ’s e achadh as ciall dha seach raon spòrs.

Tha **An Abhainn Dubh** a’ coinneachadh ri Caolas Èirisgeigh aig **Bàgh na h-Aibhne Duibhe**. ’S e dubhar an uisge no cùiltean dorcha mun bhruaich as adhbhar don fhacal dubh ann an aibhnichean mar seo. Tha àite ris an canar **A' Ghlumag Mhòr** mun allt seo.

Tha alltan beag beagan mun ear air seo a tha a’ sruthadh tro na creagan don mhuir ris an canar **Abhainn na Creige** agus tha **Tobar na Creige** aig ceann an uillt seo. ’S e **Abhainn Mhic Cuinn** no **Abhainn ’ic Cuithein** a chanar ri alltan beag eile ri taobh na pàirce ball-coise anns a’ Bhaile.

Abhainn nam Pàirceannan

Rivers

On the mainland of Scotland, *abhainn* represents a larger river, whilst *allt* represents a smaller watercourse or burn. On some smaller islands however, *allt* is not used and *abhainn* represents the smaller watercourses, simply because there are no large rivers; Eriskay is no different. The following '*abhainns*' are all small burns: **Abhainn nam Pàirceannan** 'the burn of the Parks' runs through an area called The Parks in English, or Na Pàirceannan. *Pàirc* in Gaelic is borrowed from Scots but means a 'field' rather than a 'cultivated area for recreation'.

An Abhainn Dubh 'the black burn' flows into Caolas Èirisgeigh at the appropriately named **Bàgh na h-Aibhne Duibhe** 'the bay of the black burn'. Such rivers are generally named for either the dark quality of the water or dark shady areas along their courses. On this river there is a feature called **A' Ghlumag Mhòr** 'the big pool'.

Just east of this is a tiny rill that runs through the rocks into the sea. It has the name **Abhainn na Creige** 'the burn of the crag' and at its head is **Tobar na Creige** 'the well of the crag'. Another small burn which runs past the football pitch in Baile is called either **Abhainn Mhic Cuinn** or **Abhainn 'ic Cuithein** 'MacQueen's burn'.

Tobraichean

Bha eòlas air tobraichean uisge riatanach anns na linntean mus robh uisge anns na taighean is bailtean. Tha muinntir an àite eòlach air làraichean nan tobraichean fhathast agus an dualchas a tha co-cheangailte riutha. Bhathar ag ràdh gun robh leigheas ann an uisgeachan **Tobar na Rèilig** agus bhiodh iasgairean a' dol ann gu tric. 'S e Tobar na Realeig a tha sgrìobhte air mapaichean. Chaidh **Tobar Lizzie** ainmeachadh air boireannach a bha a' fuireach faisg air – 's i an Lizzie cheudna a tha a' nochdadh san ainm Taigh Lizzie. Chaidh an tobar a dhùnadh nuair a chaidh an rathad eadar A' Choilleag agus Am Baile a thogail. 'S e **Rathad na h-Eaglaise** a th' air an rathad seo mar thoradh air an t-seann eaglais far a bheil *Ave Maria* a-nis. Chithear ainm Lizzie ann am **Bruach Lizzie** cuideachd aig bonn na bruaich far an robh i a' fuireach. 'S ann aig **Glaic an Tobair Ruaidh** a tha **An Tobar Ruadh** fhèin, faisg air a' phàirc ball-coise. Tha an t-uisge an seo dearg le meirg air sàillibh 's gu bheil salainn iarainn ann. A rèir an t-Suirbhidh Òrdanais, 's e **Tobar a' Phrionnsa** tùs na h-Aibhne Duibhe ach canar **Tobar na Sgrithinn** ris cuideachd leis gu bheil sgritheall ann coltach ri Beinn Sgritheann.

An Tobar Ruadh

Sluic nam Mònadh

Wells

Before modern sanitation and the water network, a knowledge of the location of water sources was vital to pre-industrial life. The locations of the wells are still known along with traditions associated with them. **Tobar na Rèilig** 'the well of the burial place' was said to have healing qualities, and was visited by fishermen. It is written Tobar na Realeig on maps. **Tobar Lizzie** 'Lizzie's Well' was named after a woman who lived nearby - the same woman mentioned earlier in connection with Taigh Lizzie. The well was covered over, however, when the road between Coilleag and Baile was constructed. This road is **Rathad na h-Eaglaise** 'the church road', in reference to the old church which sat on the site of where the Ave Maria is today. Lizzie also gave her name to **Bruach Lizzie** 'Lizzie's brae' at the foot of which she dwelt. **An Tobar Ruadh** 'the red well' sits in **Glaic an Tobair Ruaidh** 'the hollow of the red well' near the football pitch. This is so called because it is a chalybeate spring, meaning the water is red with rust. The Ordnance Survey map shows **Tobar a' Phrionnsa** as the source of Abhainn Dubh but it is also known locally as **Tobar na Sgrithinn** 'the well of the scree' pertaining to the same feature as Ben Scrien.

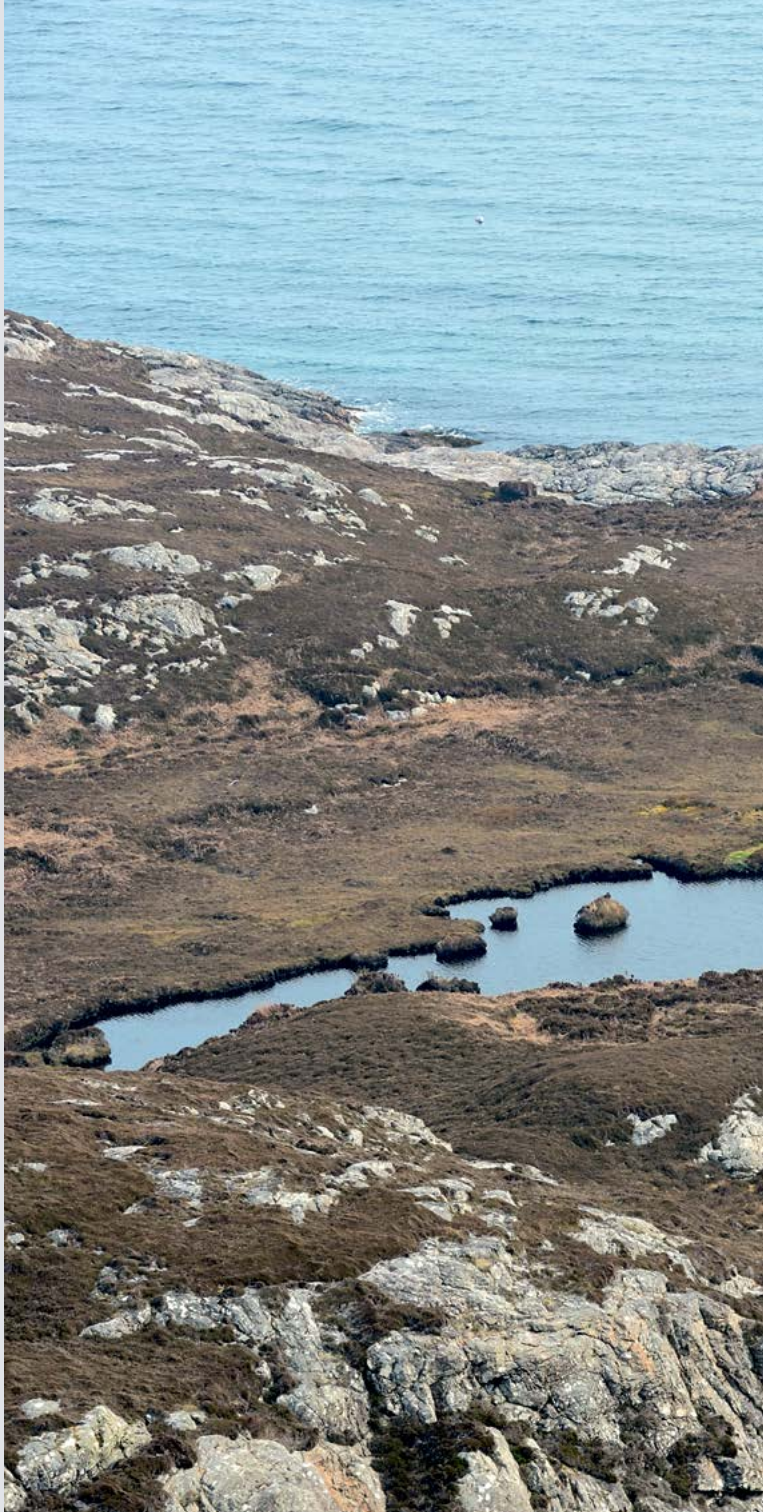
Sluic nam Mònadh, faisg air Leac na Banaraich
Sluic nam Mònadh, near Leac na Banaraich

Tobar na Rèilig
Tobar na Realeig

Sluic agus Glaicean

Tha àiteachan aig ceann a deas Èirisgeigh aig bonn Bheinn nan Stac ris an canar **Sloc na Creiche** agus **Sgala na Creiche**. 'S ann an seo, a rèir beul-aithris, a chaidh Am Breabadair (air an robh iomradh cheana) agus ma dh'fhaodte a theaghlach a mharbhadh. Tha diofar thionndaidhean de sgeul a' Bhreabadair ann ach 's e cnag na cùise gun tàinig e gu Eileanan nan Stac à àiteigin eile, gun do thog e taigh agus gun robh teaghlach aige an sin ach gun deach a mharbhadh agus ma dh'fhaodte a theaghlach cuideachd. Tha na h-àiteachan seo co-cheangailte ri am murt. Ma leanas sinn oirnn, aig fìor cheann a deas Èirisgeigh, tha leac ann ris an canar **Leac na Banaraich** a tha a' toirt iomradh air bean a' Bhreabadair. A rèir aon de na sgeulachdan, 's e banarach a bh' innte a thug e leis à Beinn na Faoghla.

Thigeadh sgothan gu diofar àiteachan an ceann a deas an eilein airson mòine a bhuain – tha **Sluic nam Mònadh** air aon de na h-àiteachan far an togadh na daoine a' mhòine. Tha sluic eile ann a leithid **Sloc Gille Lèigh** no 'sloc mac no neach-cuideachaidh an dotair' agus **Sloc a' Mhaide** air an tugar iomradh cheana. Tha **Sloc an Ìme** ri lorg beagan nas fhaide air adhart.



Loch a' Chapaill
Loch a' Chapuill

Depressions

On the south coast of Eriskay, at the foot of Beinn Stac, are places called **Sloc na Creiche** 'the pit of the plundering' and **Sgala na Creiche** 'the cliff of the plundering'. Folklore tells us that this is where Am Breabadair (mentioned earlier) and perhaps his family were killed. There are various versions of Am Breabadair's story. The bare bones are that he came to the Stac Islands from elsewhere, built a house and had a family, but either he or he and his family were later killed. These places are associated with their murder. A little further on from here on the southernmost point of mainland Eriskay is a slab called **Leac na Banaraich** 'the slab of the milkmaid', said to be a reference to Am Breabadair's wife. In one version she was a milkmaid he had brought from Benbecula.

Sluic nam Mònadh 'the pits of the peats' is a place where people would come on skiffs to dig peat in various parts of the south end of the island. This is the place where they would lift the peat. **Sloc Gille Lèigh** is 'the pit of the doctor's son or assistant', and Sloc a' Mhaide was mentioned earlier. Further on is **Sloc an Ìme** 'the pit of the butter'.

The commemoration in place-names of specific events or objects involved in violence is a common theme in Gaelic culture. Locally **Glaic na Còmhraig** or more commonly **Glaic a' Chòmhraig**, is 'the hollow of the battle', although it is sometimes locally explained as **Glaic a' Chòmhraidh** 'the hollow of the conversation'. A cairn in the hollow is said to mark the spot where John Moidartach, the eight chief of Clanranald, died in a battle that took place here in 1584. There used to be a cross on the cairn but it was reportedly stolen. The conversation is a reference to the opposing sides parleying before the battle. The name has also been written as **Glaic a' Chorraig** as if 'the hollow of the finger'.

Lochan an Àil at the foot of Beinn Stac, although filled in, is still marked on maps. Locally it is called **Loch Dhòmhnaill Iain** 'Donald John's loch' who was most probably the same Donald John in **Taigh Dhòmhnaill Iain 'ic an Tàilleir** which is situated next to it. **Loch Dubhat** (Dubhat is possibly Old Norse *dývatn* 'muddy water') was said to have a *each-uisge* or 'water horse' in it, but this was probably a story told by adults in order to keep children away. One day, the loch froze over and a child was killed by walking on the ice and falling through. Likewise, **Loch a' Chapaill** means 'the loch of the horse' and is said to be named after a resident *each-uisge*.

’S e ‘glaic a’ bhlàir’ as ciall don ainm **Glaic na Còmhraig** no **Glaic a’ Chòmhraig** a rèir muinntir an eilein, ged a bhios cuid ga mhìneachadh mar **Glaic a’ Chòmhraidh**. Tha càrn a’ comharrachadh an àite far an d’ fhuair Iain Muideartach, ochdamh ceann-cinnidh Chloinn Dòmhnaill, bàs a rèir coltais ann an cath an seo anns a’ bhliadhna 1584. B’ àbhaist crois a bhith air a’ chàrn ach chaidh a goid. Mas e còmhradh as ciall don ainm, tha an t-ainm a’ toirt iomradh air a’ chonaltradh eadar an dà thaobh mus do chuir iad cath. Is tric a chithear cogadh is fòirneart gan comharrachadh ann an ainmean-àite na Gàidhealtachd. Chaidh a’ ghlaic seo a chlàradh mar **Glaic a’ Chorraig** cuideachd.

Tha **Lochan an Àil** aig bonn Bheinn nan Stac air a chomharrachadh air mapaichean fhathast ged nach eil uisge ann tuilleadh an dèidh a lìonadh. Canar **Loch Dhòmhnaill Iain** ris, ma dh’fhaodte a’ toirt iomradh air an Dòmhnall Iain cheudna ann an **Taigh Dhòmhnaill Iain ’ic an Tàilleir** a tha air a’ chladach shìos bhuaithe. A rèir beul-aithris, bha each-uisge ann an **Loch Dubhat** (ma dh’fhaodte bhon t-Seann Lochlannais *Dý-vatn* ‘eabar + uisge’), sgeul a chaidh innse don chloinn mar rabhadh airson an cumail air falbh bhon loch. Chaidh an loch a reothadh uair agus chaidh pàiste a mharbhadh a thuit tron deigh. Tha loch eile ann ris an canar **Loch a’ Chapaill** far an robh sgeul air each-uisge eile.

Taigh Dhòmhnaill Iain ’ic an Tàilleir

Beanntan agus Cnuic

Tha **Beinn Sgritheann** os cionn a h-uile nì eile ann an Èirisgeigh. Tha an t-ainm seo bonntaichte air an *sgritheann*, no *sgritheall* mar a chanar ann an dualchainntean eile, a dh'adhbharaich maoim-slèibh air aon de na sliosan den bheinn. 'S e **Na Sgritheann** ainm an àite seo. Ma dh'fhaodte gur e Beinn nan Sgritheann a bh' oirre bho thùs ach mar a tha i ga fuaimneachadh anns an latha an-diugh, tha an t-alt air a dhol an lùib na fuaime *-nn* aig deireadh *beinn*. 'S e dreach mearachdach, Beinn Sgiathan, a chithear air mapaichean.

Tha beinn eile ann ris an canar **Beinn nan Stac** a tha a' toirt iomradh air na stacannan a chunnaic sinn roimhe.

Tha iomadh cnocan is meall eile ann an Èirisgeigh agus cuid dhiubh air a bheil am facal as cumanta sa Ghàidhlig da leithid: *cnoc*. Tha **Cnoc an t-Sìl** ann agus dà chiall air an fhacal *sìol*: sìol a chuirear san talamh no sliochd. Tha an cnoc seo faisg air an tràigh agus, a rèir muinntir an eilein, tha e a' comharrachadh làrach baile Lochlannach. Cha deach a rannsachadh a-riamh air sàillibh 's gu bheil e suidhichte ann an cladh. Tha ainm ùr air cnoc eile anns a' Bhaile ris an canar **Cnoc nan Luch**. 'S e 'luchan' a chante ris a' chloinn a bhiodh a' cluich geama an seo.

Beinn nan Stac
Beinn Stac

Mountains and Hills

Eriskay is dominated by Ben Scrien or **Beinn Sgritheann**. This takes its name from a landslide which marks one of its sides. This patch itself is known as **Na Sgritheann**. Sgritheann is possibly a dialectal variant of *sgritheall* 'scree'. The name Beinn Sgritheann was perhaps originally Beinn nan Sgritheann 'the mountain of the screes' but Beinn Sgritheann is the pronunciation today, with the article being reduced into the final -nn of *beinn*. On modern maps the name is given erroneously as Beinn Sgiathan.

Beinn Stac is likewise **Beinn nan Stac** 'the mountain of the high cliffs or stacks'. The stacks were mentioned earlier.

Many smaller hills and bumps feature in the landscape, some of which carry the default in Gaelic for a hill: *cnoc*. **Cnoc an t-Sìl** 'the hill of the seed' or 'the descendants' near the beach is locally believed to be a tumulus marking the spot of a Viking settlement. It has never been excavated, however, because it is in a graveyard. Another hill in Baile is called **Cnoc nan Luch** 'the hill of the mice,' a new name. Children would play on it and they were called 'mice', hence the name.

Cnoc an t-Sìl

’S ann anns a’ Bhaile a tha **Cnoc Seonaig** agus bhathar ag ràdh gur ann an seo a rinn Dòmhnall Èirisgeach òran mu na taighean comhairle an seo a chaidh a thogail cùlaibh air beulaibh agus dh’fheumte an togail a-rithist mar bu chòir. ’S e **Druim nan Sgrath** an druim eadar Cnoc Seonaig agus **Cnoc nan Sgrath**, air a bheil ainm eile, **Cnoc na h-Eaglaise** far a bheil Eaglais Naomh Mhìcheil.

’S ann air an Rubha Bhàn aig ceann an iar-thuath an eilein a bha **Cnoc na Feannaig** ach chaidh a leagail nuair a chaidh an cabhsair eadar Èirisgeigh agus Uibhist a Deas a thogail.

Cnoc nan Luch

Cnoc Seonaig or 'Shona's hill' is in Baile and is said to be where Dòmhnall Èirisgeigh composed his song about the council houses here which were built back to front and had to be rebuilt facing the other way. **Druim nan Sgrath** 'the ridge of the sods' is the ridge running from Cnoc Seonaig up along to **Cnoc nan Sgrath**, which is also called **Cnoc na h-Eaglaise** 'the hill of the church', where St Michael's church is.

Cnoc na Feannaig 'the hill of the crow', which was known in English as 'The Crow's Nest', was situated on Rhuban on the north-west of the island but was removed during the construction of the causeway to South Uist.

Cnoc na h-Eaglaise agus Druim nan Sgrath
Cnoc na h-Eaglaise and Druim nan Sgrath

Sgor na Bèiste

Clàr ainmean-àite
Place-name gazetteer

’S e comharraidhean-tìre beaga a tha sa mhòr-chuid de na h-ainmean san teacsa nach deach a chlàradh air mapaichean. ’S e tuairmse a th’ anns an stiùireadh seo. Tha an litir ann an camagan an dèidh ciall an ainm a’ sealltainn cànan an ainm bho thùs. Far nach eil litir ann ’s e ainm Gàidhlig a th’ ann.

Many of the names mentioned in the text are small features not recorded on maps. Local dialect has been taken into consideration in the pronunciation guide, which is meant as a rough guide only. ch represents ‘ch’ as in Scots ‘loch’, tch represents ‘ch’ as in English ‘church’. The digraphs ‘gh’ and ‘dh’ in the pronunciation make a voiced guttural sound which does not exist in standard English and are indicated as gh and dh. Likewise 'ao' is a sound which does not exist in standard English, the closest approximation is in the French oeuf ‘egg’, and is thus indicated as oeu. The pronunciation of the other vowels are as follows: ‘aw’ as in ‘law’, ‘u’ as in ‘rug’, ‘ay’ as in ‘day’, ‘ie’ as in ‘lie’, ‘au’ as in ‘auld’. Letters in bold indicate the placing of stress in a place-name. The letters in brackets after the meaning denote the language of origin. Where none is stated, the name is Gaelic. (N = Norse, ? = uncertain meaning)

Ainm Name	Ainm mapa Map name	Ciall far a bheil i againn Meaning if known	Stiùireadh fuaimneachaidh Approximate pronunciation	Clàr-stiùiridh Coordinate	Duilleag Page
An Abhainn Dubh	none	the black burn	un **ah**-veen doo	NF7969912187	59
Abhainn Mhic Cuinn / 'ic Cuthein	none	MacQueen's burn	**ah**-veen **vee**chk cun / eechk **coo**-in	NF7857111081	59
Abhainn na Creige	none	the burn of the crag	**ah**-veen nu **krayk**-uh	NF7998312254	59
Abhainn nam Pàirceannan	none	the burn of the parks	**ah**-veen num **par**-kenun	NF7906010271	59
An Acarsaid	Acairseid	the anchorage	un **ach**-kar-sitch	NF802100	13
An Acarsaid Mhòr	Acairseid Mhòr	the big anchorage	un **ach**-kar-sitch vore	NF794098	13
Bàgh na h-Aibhne Duibhe	same	the bay of Abhainn Dubh	**Bah**-gh nu **hi**-nyh **dooy**	NF798124	59
Am Baile	Balla / Baile	the village	um **bal**-uh	NF787110	45

Ainm Name	Ainm mapa Map name	Ciall far a bheil i againn Meaning if known	Stiùireadh fuaimneachaidh Approximate pronunciation	Clàr-stiùiridh Coordinate	Duilleag Page
Banca a' Bhaile	none	the bank of Am Baile	**bank** uh **val**-uh	NF777122	45
Banca an Rubha Bhàin	none	the bank of An Rubha Bàn	**bank** un **roo** **vaa**n	NF788125	49
Banca Chalbhaigh	none	the Calbhaigh sandbank	**bank**-uh **chaal**-uh-veye	NF8012	41
Banca Rubha Bun a' Mhuilinn	none	the bank of the promontory of Bun a' Mhuilinn	**bank**-uh **roo** boon uh **voo**lin	NF7974212648	49
Beinn nan Stac	Beinn Stac	the mountain of the high cliffs or stack	bayn uh **sta**chk	NF790091	73
Beinn Sgritheann	Ben Scrien	scree mountain	bayn **skree**-in	NF7946411185	73
A' Bhuaile Ghlas	none	the grey fold	a **voo**-ula ghlas	NF787097	57
Bogach	none	a wet place	**bow**-kawch	NF797117	52
Bogha an Rubha Dhuibh	none	the reef of the black point	**bow** **roo**-uh dh**oo**-ee	NF816131	15
Bogha Mhic an t-Saoir	none	MacIntyre's sunken rock	**bow**-uh **vee**chk un toeur	NF7667311562	37
Bogha Ruairidh	none	Rory's sunken rock	**bow**-uh **rooa**-ree	NF796083	37
Bruach Lizzie	none	Lizzie's brae	**broo**-och lizzy	NF788114	62
Na Brùchdannan	Na Brugannan	? seaweed islands	nuh **broo**chk-unan	NF780130	45
Bùidh na h-Oitireach	none	the buoy of the sandbank	**boo**-ee nuh **hotch**-rawch	NF790053	41
Bun a' Mhuilinn	none	the foot of the mill	boon uh **voo**-lin	NF796121	49
Caisteal a' Bhreabadair	Caisteal an Reubadair	the Weaver's castle	**cash**-jull uh **vre**-puh-dur	NF7860607161	37
Caisteal an Reubadair	none	the castle of the pirate	**cash**-jull un **ray**-puh-dur	NF7860607161	37

Ainm Name	Ainm mapa Map name	Ciall far a bheil i againn Meaning if known	Stiùireadh fuaimneachaidh Approximate pronunciation	Clàr-stiùiridh Coordinate	Duilleag Page
Calbhaigh	same	calf island (N)	**caal**-uh-veye	NF809127	19
Caolas Èirisgeigh	Caolas Eirisgeidh	the sound of Eriskay	**coeu**-lus **ay**-rish-keye	NF7913	45
An Càrn	Coilleag a' Phrionnsa	the Cairn	un carn	NF7844610217	49
Càrn / Ceann a' Chliabhain	none	the cairn / headland of the wreckage	carn / ceun uh **chlee**-ah-vin	NF8091611966	19
Carraig an Eilein	none	the fishing rock of the island	**cah**-rik un elin	NF8065811412	26
Carraig Chisholm	none	Chisholm's fishing rock	**cah**-rik Chisholm	NF805106	26
Carraig Iain	none	Iain's fishing rock	**cah**-rik **ee**-in	NF793098	26
Ceann a' Ghàrraidh	none	the head of the dyke	ceun uh **ghah**-ree	NF784102	49
Ceann an Ròin	none	the seal's head	ceun uh **rawn**	NF7668412193	37
An Ceum Cas	none	the steep path	un kaim kas	NF8036711100	57
A' Charraig Dhomhain	none	the deep fishing rock	uh **chah**-rik **dhow**-een	NF8066511376	26
Cidhe a' Chlèirich	none	the quay of the Clerk	**key** uh **chlay**-reech	NF7904511992	19
Cidhe an t-Sagairt	none	the quay of the priest	**key** un **tac**-arsht	NF7897212018	19
Cidhe nan Convicts	none	the quay of the convicts	**key**-uh nun convicts	NF7897212018	19
Cnoc an t-Sìl	none	the hill of the seed	**kraw**-chk un tcheel	NF784117	73
Cnoc Dhòmhnaill Bhàin	none	the hill of Blond Donald	**kraw**-chk **dhaw**-ill vaan	NF80591197	26
Cnoc na Feannaig	none	the hill of the crow	**kraw**-chk nuh **fee**-**eh**-nik	NF784122	75

Ainm Name	Ainm mapa Map name	Ciall far a bheil i againn Meaning if known	Stiùireadh fuaimneachaidh Approximate pronunciation	Clàr-stiùiridh Coordinate	Duilleag Page
Cnoc na h-Eaglaise	none	the hill of the church	**kraw**-chk nuh **hay**-glish	NF788113	75
Cnoc nan Luch	none	the hill of the mice	**kraw**-chk nun looch	NF787116	73
Cnoc nan Sgrath	none	the hill of the sods	**kraw**-chk nun skrah	NF786120	75
Cnoc Seonag	none	Shona's hill	**kraw**-chk **shaw**-nak	NF7862611819	75
A' Choilleag	Coilleag	the sand dune	uh **chaw**-lyak	NF786103	49
Coilleag a' Phrionnsa	none	the sand dune of the prince	**kaw**-lyak uh **froon**-sa	NF785105	49
An Corra-linn	none	the small channel	un **caw**-ruh leen	NF780138	45
Cracabhaig	Loch Cracabhaig	crook bay (N)	**crack**-uh-vik	NF793106	9
Craobh Ann	none	Ann's tree	kroeuv Ann	NF7926511840	57
Craobh Dhùghaill Eachainn	none	Dougal Hector's tree	kroeuv **dhoo**-ill **ech**-in	NF7926511840	57
Craobh mo Sheanar	none	my grandad's tree	kroeuv mo **hen**-ur	NF7926511840	57
Craobh Netty	none	Netty's tree	kroeuv Netty	NF7926511840	57
Creag Cuibhle	none	wheel crag	crek **coey**-luh	NF801098	26
Cuaraidh an Òir	none	the quarry of the gold	**koo**-aree un awr	NF785122	57
Druim nan Sgrath	none	the ridge of the sods	**droo**-eem nun skrah	NF786119	75
Dubhat	Loch Dubhat	muddy water (N)	**doo**-vat	NF802112	67
An t-Easgann	An Easgann	the eel	un **tches**-kan	NF779130	45

Ainm Name	Ainm mapa Map name	Ciall far a bheil i againn Meaning if known	Stiùireadh fuaimneachaidh Approximate pronunciation	Clàr-stiùiridh Coordinate	Duilleag Page
Eilean a' Gheòidh	same	the isle of the goose or creek	**ay**-lun uh **ghee**-aw-ee	NF791079	41
An t-Eilean Dubh	none	the black isle	un **tchay**-lun doo	?NF790077	41
An t-Eilean Leathann	Eilean Leathan	the wide island	un **tchay**-lun **lay**-hun	NF786073	45
Eilean na Coilleig	Coilleag	the island of the sand dune	**ay**-lun nuh **kaw**-lik	NF7863410475	49
Na h-Eileanan Beaga	none	the small islands	nuh **hay**-lun-un **bek**-uh	NF790077	41
Eileanan nan Stac	none	the islands of the stacks	**ay**-lun-un nuh sta<u>ch</u>k	NF785073	41
Èirisgeigh	Eriskay	Eric's Isle (N)	**ay**-rish-keye	–	5
Fionnphort	none	white port	**fyun**-uh-forsht	NF8051712323	55
A' Ghèireag	none	the sharp one	uh **<u>gh</u>eh**-rack	NF7959807430	37
A' Ghlaic Mhòr	none	the big defile	uh **<u>gh</u>lah**-<u>ch</u>k vore	NF797088	26
A' Ghlumag Mhòr	none	the big river-pool	uh **<u>gh</u>loo**-mak vore	NF796121	59
Gioghaigh	Gighay	Gyða's isle (N)	**gee**-eye	NF766046	31
Glaic a' Chòmhraidh	none	the hollow of the conversation	**glah**-<u>ch</u>k uh **<u>ch</u>aw**-ree	NF796085	67
Glaic a' Chòmhraig	none	the hollow of the battle	**glah**-<u>ch</u>k uh **<u>ch</u>aw**-rik	NF790115	67
Glaic a' Chorraig	none	the hollow of the finger	**glah**-<u>ch</u>k uh chorik	NF790116	67
Glaic an Tobair Ruaidh	none	the hollow of the red well	**glah**-<u>ch</u>k un **toe**-purr **roo**-ah-ee	NF786111	62
Glaic na Còmhraig	none	the hollow of the battle	**glah**-<u>ch</u>k nuh **caw**-rik	NF790114	67

Ainm Name	Ainm mapa Map name	Ciall far a bheil i againn Meaning if known	Stiùireadh fuaimneachaidh Approximate pronunciation	Clàr-stiùiridh Coordinate	Duilleag Page
Glaic nam Muirsgean	none	the defile of the razor fish	**glah**-chk num moor-sken	NF786122	26
Gleann an Fhir Mhòir	none	the glen of the big man	glaun un ir vore	NF802110	57
Gleann Stulabhaig	none	the glen of Stulabhaig	glaun **stool**-ah-vik	NF801103	9
Glumag Dhòmhnaill Bhàin	none	Blond Donald's little pool	**gloo**-mak **dhaw**-ill vaan	NF8094712084	22
Gob Rubha nam Bàsadairean	none	point of Rubha nam Bàsadairean	gope roo-uh num **bahs**-uh-tur-un	NF806108	52
Grianamul	Grainamul	green holm (N)	**gree**-**un**-uh-mul	NF763118	45
Na Hann	the Haun/ Haunn	safe anchorage (N)	nuh **hawn**	NF790119	13
Heinis	none	grass headland (N)	**hay**-nish	NF782091	9
Leac na Banaraich	same	the slab of the milkmaid	**lya**chk nuh **ban**-uh-reech	NF791081	67
Lingeigh	same	heather island (N)	**ling**-guy	NF751115	45
Loch a' Chapaill	Loch a' Chapuill	the loch of the horse	loch uh **cha**-pill	NF797092	67
Loch Cracabhaig	none	the loch of Cracabhaig	loch **crack**-uh-vik	NF793106	9
Loch Dhòmhnaill Iain	Lochan an Àil	Donald John's loch	loch **dhaw**-ill **ee**-in	NF790094	67
Loch Dubhat	same	loch of Dubhat	loch **doo**-vat	NF802112	67
Loch Eòsa Bhig	Loch Cracabhaig	little Joseph's loch	loch **ee**-**aw**-suh vik	NF793106	9
Meall Ainort	none	the mound of Ainort	mee-al **eye**-nort	NF795090	26
Meall nan Caorach	Rubha Meall nan Caorach	the mound of the sheep	mee-al nun **coeu**-rawch	NF798086	26
Oitir an Leisgein	none	the sandbank of the lazy man	**otch**-ir un **laysh**-kin	NF790132	41

Ainm Name	Ainm mapa Map name	Ciall far a bheil i againn Meaning if known	Stiùireadh fuaimneachaidh Approximate pronunciation	Clàr-stiùiridh Coordinate	Duilleag Page
An Oitir Mhòr	Outer Oitir Mhór	the big sandbank	un **otch**-ir vore	NF754066	41
Othaisgeir	Hoisgeir	? skerry (N)	**aw**-ash-kir	NF776116	37
Na Pàirceannan	The Parks	the parks	nuh **parchk**-un-un	NF791102	59
Port a' St Patrick	none	the harbour of the St Patrick	pawst uh saint patrick	NF791099	19
Port an Tàilleir	none	the tailor's port	pawst an **tah**-lee-ur	NF7919609589	55
Port Aonghais mhic Mhurchaidh	none	Angus son of Murdo's port	pawst un-**oeu**sh veechk **voor**-uch-ee	NF7909412069	55
Port Chaluim Mhòir	none	Big Calum's port	pawst **chah**-lim vore	NF8051712323	55
Port Dhùghaill Eachainn	none	Dougal son of Hector's port	pawst **dhoo**-ill **ech**-in	NF7914112108	55
Port 'ic Iain Òig	none	Young Ian's son's port	pawst ichk **ee**-in aw-ik	NF7902609916	55
An Rathad Àrd	none	the high road	un raht ahrt	NF7929012019	57
Rathad na h-Eaglaise	none	the church road	raht nuh **hay**-glish	NF788115	62
Roc Druim Ghioghaigh	none	the rock of the ridge of Gioghaidh	rawk **droo**-eem **ghee**-eye	NF824119	31
Roc na Làir	none	the rock of the mare	rawk nuh lahr	NF819079	37
Roc na Pollaidh	none	the submerged rock of the Polly	rawk nuh polly	NF816122	15
Roisinis	same	horse headland (N)	**rawsh**-uh-nish	NF805122	9
Rònais	none	rough headland (N)	**raw**-nish	NF806112	9
An Ruadh-Phort	none	the brown port	un **roo**-ugh fawst	NF7896611994	55
An Rubha Bàn	Rubha Ban	the white promontory	un **roo**-uh bahn	NF784121	49

Ainm Name	Ainm mapa Map name	Ciall far a bheil i againn Meaning if known	Stiùireadh fuaimneachaidh Approximate pronunciation	Clàr-stiùiridh Coordinate	Duilleag Page
An Rubha Bàn (settlement)	Rhuban	the white promontory	un **roo**-uh bahn	NF786118	49
An Rubha Dubh	Rubha Dubh	the black point	un **roo** doo	NF816131	15
Rubha Fraoich	none	heather promontory	**roo**-uh **freou**-ch	NF7915312186	52
Rubha Iain Roisinis	Rubha Liath	the promontory of Iain from Roisinis	**roo**-uh **ee**-in **rawsh**-uh-nish	NF7967512434	52
An Rubha Mòr	Rubha Liath	the large promontory	un **roo**-uh more	NF800091	52
Rubha nam Bàsadairean	Rubha Basadearn	the promontory of the sinking bogs	**roo**-uh num **bahs**-uh-tur-un	NF805108	52
Rubha Sheisinis	same	the promomtory of Seisinis	**roo**-uh **haysh**-uh-nish	NF801098	26
Seisinis	Sheisinis	rushes headland (N)	**shaysh**-uh-nish	NF802098	9
Sgala Mhòr Roisinis	none	the big cliff of Roisinis	**skal**-uh vore **rawsh**-uh-nish	NF809121	37
Sgala na Creiche	none	the cliff of the plundering	**skal**-uh nuh **kray**-chuh	NF788085	67
Sgala nam Breug	none	the cliff of the lies	**skal**-uh num **bree**-ak	NF7885311905	37
Na Sgalachan Mòra	none	the big cliffs	nu **skal**-uh-chun **more**-uh	NF809121	37
Sgeir a' Bhanca	Bun a' Mhuilinn	the skerry of the bank	skehr uh **vank**-uh	NF794126	49
Sgeir an t-Salainn	none	the skerry of the salt	skehr un **tah**-leen	NF803132	37
An Sgeir Mhòr	none	the big skerry	un skeir vore	NF7977912300	37
Sgeir na h-Aibhne Duibhe	none	the skerry of Abhainn Dubh	skehr nuh **hi**-nyh **dooy**	NF7977912300	37
Sgeir na h-Àirigh Samhraidh	none	the skerry of the summer shieling	skehr nuh **hah**-ree **sah**-oo-ree	NF785107	31
Sgor na Bèiste	none	the rock of the beast	skawr nuh **bay**-sh-juh	–	15

Ainm Name	Ainm mapa Map name	Ciall far a bheil i againn Meaning if known	Stiùireadh fuaimneachaidh Approximate pronunciation	Clàr-stiùiridh Coordinate	Duilleag Page
Na Sgritheann	none	the screes	nuh **skree**-in	NF794113	73
Sloc a' Mhaide	same	the pit of the wooden stick	**slaw**-chk uh **vatch**-uh	NF8069411695	19
Sloc an Ìme	none	the pit of the butter	**slaw**-chk un **eem**-uh	NF8062411432	67
Sloc Gille Lèigh	none	the pit of the doctor's son or assistant	**slaw**-chk **gil**-uh lay	NF796085	67
Sloc na Creiche	none	the pit of the plundering	**slaw**-chk nuh **kray**-chuh	NF783089	67
Sluic nam Mònadh	none	the pits of the peats	**sloo**-chk nu **maw**-nugh	NF789084	67
An Stac Àrd	An Stac	the high stack	un **sta**chk ahrt	NF786071	37
Na Stacanan Dubha	Stack Islands	the black stacks	nuh **sta**chk-un-un **doo**-uh	NF785073	41
Stulabhaig	none	? Stulli's bay (N)	**stool**-uh-vik	NF801103	9
Taigh an Tairbh	none	the Bull's house	tie un **ter**-iv	NF788114	57
Taigh Dhòmhnaill Bhàin	none	the house of Blond Donald	tie **dhaw**-ill vaan	NF805119	26
Taigh Dhòmhnaill Iain 'ic an Tàilleir	none	the house of Donald John, the tailor's son	tie **dhaw**-il **ee**-in ichk un **tah**-lee-ur	?NF7919609589	55
Taigh Fairy	Ben Scrien Cottage	the Fairy's house	tie fairy	NF788114	57
Taigh Lizzie	Ben Scrien Cottage	Lizzie's house	tie lizzie	NF788114	57
Taigh nam Bòcan	none	the house of the ghosts	tie num **baw**chk-un	NF7874210760	57
Tobar a' Phrionnsa	same	the well of the prince	**toe**-purr uh **froon**-sa	NF794113	62
Tobar Lizzie	none	Lizzie's well	**toe**-purr lizzie	NF788112	62

Ainm Name	Ainm mapa Map name	Ciall far a bheil i againn Meaning if known	Stiùireadh fuaimneachaidh Approximate pronunciation	Clàr-stiùiridh Coordinate	Duilleag Page
Tobar na Creige	none	the well of the crag	**toe**-purr nuh **krayk**-uh	NF800120	59
Tobar na Rèilig	Tobar na Realeig	the well of the burial place	**toe**-purr nuh **ray**-lik	NF783098	62
Tobar na Sgrithinn	Tobar a' Phrionnsa	the well of the scree	**toe**-purr nuh **skree**-in	NF794113	62
An Tobar Ruadh	none	the red well	un **toe**-purr **roo**-ugh	NF786111	62
An Tràigh Leis	none	the ? beach	un try laysh	NF786106	49

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Tha an leabhran seo air cuid de dh'ainmean-àite Èirisgeigh nach eil cho aithnichte na fhianais air an dlùth-cheangal eadar muinntir an àite is an tìr. Chaidh 300 ainm-àite – cruinneachadh nach beag idir - a thrusadh, le mòran dhiubh a' buntainn ris a' chòrsa is na h-uisgeachan timcheall air an eilean, agus iad a' sònrachadh sgeulachdan, cur-seachadan is beatha làitheil air eilean far a bheil a' Ghàidhlig fhathast gu math làidir.

Tha Dualchas Nàdair na h-Alba toilichte a bhith ag obair ann an com-pàirteachas ri Ainmean-Àite na h-Alba is Ceòlas airson daoine 's ar n-àrainneachd nàdarra a chomharrachadh. Le bhith a' cleachdadh eòlas nan daoine às an sgìre, tha beartas de dh'ainmean-àite – mòran dhiubh nach do nochd ann an clò riamh roimhe – gan lorg 's an cuid brìghean gan deasbad.

This booklet on some of the lesser-known place-names of Eriskay is testimony to the inhabitants' inseparable link to the island's landscape. A staggering 300 placenames, many pertaining to the coast and surronding waters, have been collected and reflect stories, past-times and daily routines in what remains a Gaelic-speaking island.

Scottish Natural Heritage is pleased to partner with Ainmean-Àite na h-Alba and Ceòlas on this celebration of people and our natural environment. By drawing on local knowledge, a wealth of place-names - including many that have not been recorded in print before - are identified and their meaning discussed.

ISBN 978-1-78391-847-8
Dualchas Nàdair na h-Alba / Scottish Natural Heritage
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Ainmean-Àite na h-Alba
Gaelic Place-Names of Scotland

ceòlas