

# Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

**Ie Ruairidh MacIlleathain**

*A special programme, in the form of a “letter”, written and compiled by Roddy Maclean, and specifically aimed at Gaelic learners who already have some knowledge of the language. A short vocabulary and comments on points of grammar and figures of speech are included with the text. If you have comments, Roddy can be contacted by e-mail at [roddy.maclean@bbc.co.uk](mailto:roddy.maclean@bbc.co.uk) \* This is Litir 260.*

Thar nan seachdainean a dh’fhalbh, bha sinn a’ toirt sùil air earrannan de dh’eachdraidh Inbhir Nis, mar a chaidh an aithris le “Naochadair Chlach na Cùdainn”, Iain MacIlleathain. Bheir mi an sreath gu crìch an-diugh le naidheachd air buidseachd.

Bha dà cheàrnaidh ann an Inbhir Nis a bha ainmeil airson buidseachd ri linn seanmhair an naochadair. Bhiodh sin, chanainn, aig toiseach an ochdamh linn deug. B’ iad dà ghleann – am fear far a bheil Allt a’ Mhuilinn a’ sruthadh, faisg air Acadamaidh Allt a’ Mhuilinn, agus an ath-ghleann gu sear air sin, far am b’ àbhaist an t-Allt Muineach a bhith ann. Tha an t-allt sin ann am pìoban fon talamh an-diugh. Agus chan eil sgeul nas mò air na bothain anns an robh na bana-bhuidsich a’ fuireach.

Là a bha seo bha buidheann de chloinn a’ cluich ann an Allt a’ Mhuilinn nuair a chunnaic iad corp crèadha. ’S e sin iomhaigh de chuideigin, air a dhèanamh le crèadh, anns am biodh bana-bhuidseach a’ cur prìnichean. Bhiodh na prìnichean a’ riochdachadh mhallachdan a rinn a’ bhana-bhuidseach air an duine agus, mar a chrìonadh an corp anns an allt, ’s ann a dh’fhàsadh an duine a bha fo gheasaibh lag is tinn. Mu dheireadh gheibheadh e bàs.

Thug a’ chlann an corp, no *am bodachan* mar a ghabhas Iain MacIlleathain air, a-mach às an allt, agus thuirte dhiubh gum faca i a seanmhair, Creibh Mhòr, a’ dèanamh a leithid. Sgaoil an naidheachd sin am measg muinntir a’ bhaile, agus cha b’ fhada gus an robh na h-ùghdarrasan a’ tadhal air Creibh Mhòr. Chuir iad an cràdh i gus am faigheadh iad aideachadh bhuaipe gu robh i an sàs ann am buidseachd.

Bha Creibh Mhòr treun, ge-tà, agus cha do dh’aidich i an eucoir. Ach fhuair na h-ùghdarrasan aideachadh bho a piuthar. Dh’aidich ise gu robh an corp a’ riochdachadh fear de dh’uaislean a’ bhaile – Mac Sheòrsa à Càisteal Stìll. Fhuair an dìthis pheathraichean binn bàis.

B’ e teine an dòigh a bh’ ann aig an àm ud airson bana-bhuidseach a chur gu bàs. Thog na h-ùghdarrasan càrn mòr fiodha air Tom nan Ceann – cnoc faisg air togalach a’ BhBC – dhuibhse a tha eòlach air Inbhir Nis. Chaidh Creibh air an teine an toiseach agus, a rèir beul-aithris, ged nach eil an naochadair ag aithris seo, chaidh cuideigin ga h-ionnsaigh le soitheach uisge. Ach nuair a chaidh a chur ann an cuimhne an duine gur e bana-bhuidseach a bh’ ann an Creibh, dhòirt e an t-uisge a-mach. Rinn Creibh mallachd. “Nan robh mi air balgam dhen uisge sin a ghabhail,” thuirte i, “bha mi air boglach a dhèanamh de dh’Inbhir Nis.”

Ach air ais gu aithris an naochadair. Nuair a chunnaic piuthar Creibh nach robh dol-às aice, thuirte i, “Uill, uill, nan robh fios air a bhith agam gun tigeadh e gu seo, bhiodh mòran, a chuireas cleòcannan sgàrlaid orra, an seo an-diugh.” Bha i a’ ciallachadh gum

biodh cuid de mhnathan uasal Inbhir Nis a' cèilidh oirre, agus iad a' sireadh deagh fhortan tro bhuidseachd.

Thuir i nach cuireadh Mac Sheòrsa sam bith a chìr tro fhalt liath ann an Dreigidh tuilleadh. Agus, a rèir beul-aithris, thuit Seòras Mac Sheòrsa à Caisteal Stìll far eich ann an seachd ceud deug, ceathrad 's a h-ochd (1748) aig ceann an iar gleann an Uillt Mhuinich, sgìre nam bana-bhuidseach. B' e Mac Sheòrsa Iar-shiorram Siorrachd Inbhir Nis, agus bha e ainmeil airson a bhith ag iomairt an aghaidh buidseachd. Chaochail e far an do thuit e, ged nach eilear ag aithris co-dhiù bha falt liath air a cheann gus nach robh.

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**Faclan na seachdainne:** buidseachd: *witchcraft*; Acadamaidh Allt a' Mhuilinn: *Millburn Academy*; chanainn: *I would say*; corp crèadha: *clay body*; eucoir: *crime*; binn bàis: *death sentence*; dhòirt e: *he poured*; mallachd: *curse*; balgam: *mouthful*; cleòcannan sgàrlaid: *scarlet cloaks (favoured at the time by the gentlewomen of Inverness)*.

**Abairtean na seachdainne:** mar a chaidh an aithris le Naochadair Chlach na Cùdainn: *as they were reported by the Clachnacuddin Nonagenarian*; bheir mi an sreath gu crìch an-diugh: *I will end the series today*; ri linn seanmhair X: *at the time of X's grandmother*; far am b' àbhaist X a bhith ann: *where X used to be*; chan eil sgeul nas mò air na bothain: *the bothies are no longer to be seen either*; bhiodh na prìnichean a' riochdachadh mhallachdan: *the pins would represent curses*; mar a chrìonadh an corp ... 's ann a dh'fhàsadh X lag: *as the [clay] body faded away .. so X would grow weak*; gheibheadh e bàs: *he would die*; chuir iad an cràdh i: *they tortured her*; gus am faigheadh iad aideachadh bhuaipe: *until they got [would get] a confession from her*; fear de dh'uaislean a' bhaile: *one of the town's gentry*; Mac Sheòrsa à Caisteal Stìll: *Cuthbert of Castlehill*; chaidh cuideigin ga h-ionnsaigh le soitheach uisge: *someone went towards her with a vessel of water*; bha mi air boglach a dhèanamh de X: *I would have turned X into a bog*; nach cuireadh Mac Sheòrsa sam bith a chìr tro fhalt liath ann an Dreigidh tuilleadh: *that no Cuthbert would ever again put his comb through grey hair at Drakies (part of Inverness)*; thuit X far eich: *X fell from his horse*.

**Puing-ghràmar na seachdainne:** aig ceann an iar gleann an Uillt Mhuinich: *at the western end of the glen of the Allt Muineach (the thorny burn)*. *I have written before in this column of the grammatical riches, as well as the cultural treasures, to be found in our place name heritage. Allt is a masculine noun which in the genitive singular case slenderises to uillt (it obviously cannot lenite as it starts with a vowel). The adjective which accompanies it, however, is both lenited (if that is possible) and slenderised. Thus muineach changes to mhuinich. Here are some other similar examples from maps of the Highlands (see if you can translate them for yourself and work out the name of the burn for which the feature is named): Loch an Uillt Ghiuthais (Strathconon); Maol an Uillt Mhòir (Applecross); Loch an Uillt Bheithe (Torridon); Meall an Uillt Chaoil (Morar).*

**Gnàths-cainnt na seachdainne:** Thar nan seachdainnean a dh'fhalbh: *over the past [few] weeks*. Thar takes the genitive case, which is the reason for the genitive plural article, nan, appearing before seachdainnean.

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