

# Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

*A special programme, in the form of a “letter”, designed for 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, Ruairidh can be contacted at [rodny.macleon@bbc.co.uk](mailto:rodny.macleon@bbc.co.uk). This is Litir 596. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 292 corresponds to Litir 596.*

An cuala sibh riamh mu faire chlàidh? Tha e a’ ciallachadh graveyard watch. Faire chlàidh. Tha sinn fhathast ann an Loch Abar far an do chruinnich Calum MacGhilleathain fiosrachadh mun faire chlàidh bho Iain Dòmhnallach agus laoi ch eile.

Bhathar a’ creidsinn gun robh an spiorad aig an duine mu dheireadh a bh’ air a thiodhlacadh ann an cladh a’ cumail faire air na mairbh gus an tigeadh dust an ath dhuine. Bhathar an dòchas nach biodh aig spiorad an duine sin a bhith a’ cumail faire ro fhada. Bhiodh strì ann uaireannan – nam biodh dithis a’ bàsachadh mun aon àm – do charaid fhèin a chur fon fhòid mus nochdadh ciste an neach eile.

Dh’ inns Iain Dòmhnallach do Chalum MacGhilleathain mu thuras a bha ministear a’ gabhail cuairt air bruach Abhainn Spiothain. Bha e aig àth, agus mhothaich e do dhà chù a thàinig **o dhiofar àirdean** agus a choinnich ri chèile air taobh thall na h-aibhne. Thòisich na coin air sabaid. Aig a’ cheann thall bha fear dhiubh air a ghoirteachadh gu dona agus chaidh am fear eile tarsainn na h-aibhne. Gu h-obann dh’ fhalbh na coin à fianais.

Seachdain an dèidh sin aig an dearbh àite bha dà bhuidhinn de dhaoine a’ dèanamh air a’ chladh. Bha dust mairbh aig gach buidhinn. Thachair iad ri chèile aig an àth. Bha argamaid eatarra a thaobh cò rachadh tarsainn na h-aibhne an toiseach. Thòisich iad air sabaid agus b’ iad an fheadhainn a bhuannaich a fhuair an cothrom a dhol ann an toiseach. Thiodhlaic iad a’ chiste aca anns a’ chladh agus cha robh faire chlàidh fhada aig an spiorad sin mus tàinig a’ bhuidheann eile leis a’ chiste aca.

Bha faire de sheòrsa eile a’ dol anns na cladhan sin cuideachd. Dh’ inns Calum MacGhilleathain mu chlach-uaighe ann an Cladh Chill Mo Naomhaig faisg air Drochaid an Aonachain. Bha toll anns a’ chloich. Toll a chaidh a dhèanamh le peilear.

Aig an àm sin **bhiodh feadhainn a’ goid chorp** bho chladhan mar a rinn Burke is Hare ann an Dùn Èideann. Bha fear às an sgìre na oileanach ann an Dùn Èideann, a’ dèanamh dotaireachd. Latha a bha seo thàinig corp don deuchainn-lann airson leigeil leis na h-oileanaich obair lannsa fheuchainn air. ’S e boireannach a bh’ ann agus bha fiaclan air leth math aice. Chuir na fiaclan boireannach aig an taigh ann an cuimhne an oileanaich Abraich – tè air an robh bean Dhòmhnail ’ic Iain.

Sgrìobh an t-oileanach dhachaigh airson faighneachd an robh duine sam bith air bàs fhaighinn o chionn ghoirid. Thàinig fios gun do chaochail bean Dhòmhnail ’ic Iain.

Sgrìobh an t-oileanach air ais sa bhad, ag ràdh nach robhar a' cumail faire air na cladhan ann an Loch Abar mar bu chòir.

Co-dhiù, oidhche a bha seo bha athair Iain Dhòmhnallaich ann an Cladh Chill Mo Naomhaig a' cumail faire an aghaidh mèirlich nan corp. Bha gunna aige. Dh'fhàs e sgìth agus thuit e na chadal. Dhùisg e gu h-obann agus chunnaic e rudeigin. Bha e a' smaoinichadh gur e mèirleach chorp a bh' ann. Loisg e an gunna. Ach chan e duine a bh' ann. 'S e clach-uaighe a bh' ann. Agus airson deicheadan às dèidh sin bha an toll ri fhaicinn anns a' chloich. 'S dòcha gu bheil fhathast.

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**Faclan na Litreach:** faire chladh: *graveyard watch*; Loch Abar: *Lochaber*; laoich: *heroes*; dotaireachd: *medical course*; deuchainn-lann: *laboratory*; deicheadan: *decades*.

**Abairtean na Litreach:** bhathar a' creidsinn: *it was believed*; an spiorad aig an duine mu dheireadh a bh' air a thiodhlacadh: *the spirit of the last man who was buried*; nam biodh dithis a' bàsachadh mun aon àm: *if two people died about the same time*; do charaid fhèin a chur fon fhòid: *to bury your own friend/relative*; mus nochdadh ciste an neach eile: *before the next person's coffin appeared*; a' gabhail cuairt air bruach Abhainn Spiothain: *taking a stroll on the bank of the River Spean*; bha fear dhiubh air a ghoirteachadh gu dona: *one of them was badly hurt*; tarsainn na h-aibhne: *across the river*; gu h-obann dh'fhalbh na coin à fianais: *suddenly the dogs disappeared*; a' dèanamh air a' chladh: *making for the graveyard*; bha dust mairbh aig gach buidhinn: *each group had the remains of a dead person*; bha argamaid eatarra a thaobh cò rachadh: *there was an argument between them about who would go*; b' iad an fheadhainn a bhuannaich a fhuair an cothrom: *it was the ones who won that got the opportunity*; mu chlach-uaighe ann an Cladh Chill Mo Naomhaig faisg air Drochaid an Aonachain: *about a gravestone in the Kilmonivaig Graveyard near Spean Bridge*; toll a chaidh a dhèanamh le peilear: *a hole that was made by a bullet*; airson leigeil leis na h-oileanaich obair lannsa fheuchainn air: *to allow the students to dissect it*; chuir na fìaclan boireannach aig an taigh ann an cuimhne an oileanaich Abraich: *the teeth reminded the Lochaber student of a woman at home*; an robh duine sam bith air bàs fhaighinn: *had anybody died*; dhùisg e gu h-obann: *he awoke suddenly*; loisg e an gunna: *he fired the gun*; bha an toll ri fhaicinn: *the hole was to be seen*.

**Puing-chànain na Litreach:** **bhiodh feadhainn a' goid chorp:** *some people would steal bodies. Corp is the indefinite genitive plural of corp. Corp is pluralized by slenderization to cuirp. For this type of word the genitive plural (in traditional usage) is the same as the nominative singular. You might be familiar with the place name Allt nan Corp, the burn of the bodies, a burn in which clay bodies were left as part of an ancient ritual wishing harm upon a person. This name demonstrates the genitive plural form. Without the article we lenite the noun to cuirp and it is employed in the sentence above following the verbal noun a' goid. Note also mèirleach chorp, a robber of bodies.*  
**Gnathas-cainnt na Litreach:** mhothaich e do dhà chù a thàinig o dhiofar àirdean: *he noticed two dogs that came from different directions.*

Tha “Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh” air a maoinichadh le MG ALBA