

# Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

**Iain Guinne, am ‘mèirleach onarach’**

*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 748. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 444 corresponds to Litir 748.*

Bidh mòran agaibh eòlach air an t-Slochd air an A9. Tha e deas air Inbhir Nis eadar Srath Èireann agus Srath Spè. 'S e seann litreachadh a th' ann an S-L-O-C-H-D; thathar ga litreachadh S-L-O-C an-diugh.

Leis an fhìrinn innse, tha trì slocan an sin. 'S iad sin an Sloc Mòr, far a bheil an rathad mòr agus an loidhne-rèile ri taobh a chèile, an Sloc Beag, anns a bheil an loidhne-rèile agus rathad beag ionadail (an seann A9), agus Sloc Muic.

'S e *Slochd Mhuic* a th' air na mapaichean OS, ach 's e 'Sloc Muic' a chanas muinntir an àite. Gu dearbh, 's e *Sluch Muichk* a th' aig Uilleam Roy air a' mhapa-airm a rinn e ann am meadhan an ochdamh linn deug.

Tha Allt Sloc Muic a' sruthadh tron t-Sloc. Anns an t-seann aimsir, bha an rathad eadar Inbhir Nis agus meadhan na h-Alba a' ruith **co-shùnte ri** Allt Sloc Muic. B' e sin an rathad a thog an Seanalair Wade, agus gabhaidh e leantainn fhathast.

Tha coille anns an àite an-diugh ach tha amharas agam nach robh an uair sin. Tha mo bheachd stèidhichte air mapa Roy, nach eil a' sealltainn coille. Co-dhiù bha coille ann gus nach robh, bha an t-àite math airson mèirlich a bhith a' feitheamh ri luchd-taisteil.

Aig deireadh an ochdamh linn deug, bha mèirleach ann air an robh Iain Guinne mar ainm. Bha e a' fuireach taobh a' Mhonaidh Ruaidh ann am badeigin agus bha e mion-eòlach air gach pàirt dhen rathad eadar Inbhir Nis is Bàideanach. A dh'aindeoin 's gun robh e ri mèirle, bha cliù aige mar dhuine onarach, mar a ch'inn sinn bhon stòiridh a tha mi a' dol a dh'innse dhuibh.

Bha teachdaire a' dol eadar Inbhir Nis agus a' Ghalltachd, le airgead mòr na sporan a bha e a' dol a thoirt do chuideigin aig deas. Chan eil mi buileach cinnteach cà' robh e, ach b' fheudar dha an oidhche a chur seachad ann an taigh-òsta air an rathad. Thàinig fear eile a-steach don taigh-òsta. Bha am fear seo na Ghàidheal agus bha èideadh spaideil Gàidhealach air.

Ghabh an dithis suipear còmhlach agus, leis gun robh an còmhradh a' dol gu math, thuirt an teachdaire ris an fhear eile gun robh an t-eagal air ro Iain Guinne. Dh'inns e don fhear eile gun robh e a' giùlan airgead. Agus thuirt am fear spaideil ris, 'Na gabh eagal, bidh mi nam fhear-iùil dhut a-màireach agus cha tig trioblaid nad rathad.'

An ath mhadainn, dh'fhalbh an dithis còmhlach. An dèidh greis, thionndaidh an Gàidheal spaideil air an teachdaire agus thuirt e, 'Am bu toigh leat sealladh fhaighinn de dh'Iain Guinne?'

‘Cha bu toigh’l,’ fhreagair am fear eile, ach cho luath ’s a bha na faclan a-mach às a’ bheul aige, thuig e a mhearachd.

‘Is mise Iain Gunne,’ thuir am fear spaideil. Rinn e fead. Nochd buidheann de dhaoine sa bhad – an luchd-taice aige. Bha an t-eagal air an teachdaire.

‘Na gabh eagal,’ thuir an Guinneach, ‘Bha mi a’ dol a thoirt do chuid airgid bhuaat ach chuir thu earbsa annam. Agus, mar sin, leigidh mi leat falbh.’ Sheall e an t-slighe air adhart don teachdaire agus dh’fhalbh e fhèin ’s na daoine aige don mhonadh. Sin agaibh am ‘mèirleach onarach’ – Iain Gunne.

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**Faclan na Litreach:** mapa-airm: *military map*; an Seanalair Wade: *General Wade*; Bàideanach: *Badenoch*; teachdaire: *message*; Iain Gunne: *John Gunn*; fead: *whistle*.

**Abairtean na Litreach:** Bidh mòran agaibh eòlach air an t-Slochd air an A9: *many of you will know the Slochd on the A9 (main road)*; deas air Inbhir Nis eadar Srath Èireann agus Srath Spè: *south of Inverness between Strathdearn and Strathspey*; far a bheil an rathad mòr agus an loidhne-rèile ri taobh a chèile: *where the main road and the railway line come close to each other*; gabhaidh e leantainn fhathast: *it can still be followed*; tha amharas agam nach robh an uair sin: *I suspect there wasn't at that time*; nach eil a’ sealltainn coille: *which doesn't show a wood*; co-dhiù bha coille ann gus nach robh: *whether or not there was a wood there*; airson mèirlich a bhith a’ feitheamh ri luchd-taisteil: *for robbers to wait for travellers*; taobh a’ Mhonaidh Ruaidh: *in the region of the Cairngorms*; a dh’aindeoin ’s gun robh e ri mèirle: *despite the fact that he was involved in robbery*; bha cliù aige mar dhuine onarach: *he was renowned as an honourable man*; b’ fheudar dha an oidhche a chur seachad ann an taigh-òsta: *he had to spend the night in a hostelry*; bha èideadh spaideil Gàidhealach air: *he was smartly dressed in Highland clothes*; ghabh an dithis suipear còmhla: *the two men took supper together*; na gabh eagal: *don't be afraid*; bidh mi nam fhear-iùil dhut a-màireach agus cha tig trioblaid nad rathad: *I'll act as your guide tomorrow and no trouble will come your way*; am bu toigh leat sealladh fhaighinn de?: *would you like to get a view of?*; cho luath ’s a bha na faclan a-mach às a’ bheul aige, thuig e a mhearachd: *as soon as the words were out of his mouth, he appreciated his mistake*; chuir thu earbsa annam: *you put trust in me*; leigidh mi leat falbh: *I'll let you leave*.

**Puing-chànain na Litreach:** *Have you ever had a look at William Roy's map of Scotland, based on his military survey of 1747-55? If not, I'd recommend you to have a look at what he recorded in your part of the country. You'll see (an anglicised form of) the Gaelic names of settlements in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, including some which no longer exist. It's available as a zoomable, seamless map on the website of the National Library of Scotland.*

**Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach:** a’ ruith **co-shìnte ri:** *running parallel to.*

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