

# Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

## le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

### Cath na Leargaidh Ghallta

*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 [roddy.maclean@bbc.co.uk](mailto:roddy.maclean@bbc.co.uk). This is Litir 872. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 568 corresponds to Litir 872.*

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh an t-seachdain sa chaidh mu Chath na Leargaidh Ghallta agus Co-chòrdadh Pheairt. Bu mhath leam earrannan beaga à seann leabhar a leughadh dhuibh an-diugh. Tha iad mu dheidhinn Cath na Leargaidh Ghallta. Tha iad à ‘Eachdraidh na h-Alba’ le Aonghas MacCoinnich. Chaidh an leabhar fhoillseachadh ann an Glaschu ann an ochd ceud deug, seasgad ’s a seachd (1867). Tha mi air an teacs aige – agus an litreachadh aige – atharrachadh beagan.

Seo a’ chiad earrann: ... *Fhuair cabhlach Haco ...seachad air Maol Chinntire, ’s a-steach do chaolas Chluaidh. Bu sheann laoch Haco, a bha dà fhichead bliadhna ’s a sia na rìgh air Lochlann. Cha robh Alasdair III leth sin a dh’aois. Ach **thug an laoch òg an car ...às an t-seann laoch**. Bha fios aig fear Alba gum bu bhuannachd dha fhèin, ’s gum bu chall do Haco, a h-uile latha a b’ urrainn e ... a chur seachad gun tòiseachadh air a’ chogadh.*

A bheil sibh a’ tuigsinn sin? Tha an t-ùghdar ag ràdh gun robh Alasdair, Rìgh òg na h-Alba, glic. Bha e a’ feuchainn ri dàil a chur air an t-sabaid leis na Lochlannaich. Anns an dòigh sin, bha e soirbheachail.

Seo an dàrna earrann: *Bha Alasdair ...a’ tional shaighdearan às gach ceàrna dhen rìoghachd, ’s gan cur ann am buidhnean beaga mun cuairt dhen oirthir mu choinneimh nan luingeas; ’s a thuilleadh air sin bha gun teagamh sùil aig Alasdair ris na h-eileamaidean fhèin a thighinn ga chòmhnadh an ùine ghoirid ... shèid stoirm cho uabhasach ’s cho obann ’s gun do shaoil na Lochlannaich gum b’ iad na ban-draoidhean Albannach a bha a’ togail na gaoithe.*

Uill, cha b’ iad na ban-draoidhean a bu chuireach ris an droch shìde – ach an ràithe fhèin. Is bha fios aig Alasdair gun tigeadh stoirm uaireigin.

Seo an treas earrann: *Bha an luingeas a’ leantainn air a bhith a’ reubadh air falbh thar an acraichean, ’s a’ ruith suas an caolas ron ghaoith, ’s a’ briseadh air na cladaichean, no a’ sgailceadh ri chèile **san oidhche dhùdlaidh dhuirch** ... Nuair a shoilleirich a’ mhadainn bha na cladaichean làn de luingeas briste ’s na seòladairean ’s na saighdearan timcheall orra, ag oidhirpeachadh air an dìon on tuath-cheathairn a bh’ air dol fo armachd ’s a’ gabhail nam fàth air na Lochlannaich a chreachadh ’s a mharbhadh mar a b’ urrainn iad.*

Cha b’ e saighdearan Albannach a-mhàin a bha cunnartach do na Lochlannaich, ach muinntir an àite fhèin. Lean an stoirm fad latha is oidhche. Nuair a shocraich i beagan, a rèir MhicChoinnich, *Chaidh Haco ’s a shaighdearan gu tìr airson ‘na b’ urrainn dhaibh a shàbhaladh dhen cuid’.*

Seo an earrann mu dheireadh agam dhuibh: *Chunnaic iad an t-arm Albannach, a bha nis air tional às gach ceàrna, ag iadhadh mun timcheall gu neo-sgàthach, colganta, 's rìgh Alasdair fhèin air an ceann. Sguab iad na h-eilthirich sìos romhpa gu beul na mara leis a' chiad bhuille...*

Tuigidh sibh nach b' e sin deireadh an sgeòil. Bha Cath na Leargaidh Ghallta dìreach a' tòiseachadh. Cha robh buaidh mhòr aig Alba aig àm cogaidh. Ach bha i buannachdail aig àm sìthe. 'S dòcha nach robh an cath sin buileach cho cudromach ri Blàr Allt a' Bhonnaich. Ach bha e fhathast cudromach ann an eachdraidh na h-Alba.

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**Faclan na Litreach:** Cath na Leargaidh Ghallta: *The Battle of Largs*; Co-chòrdadh Pheairt: *The Treaty of Perth*; litreachadh: *spelling*; ùghdar: *author*; acraichean: *anchors*.

**Abairtean na Litreach:** seachad air Maol Chinntire, 's a-steach do chaolas Chluaidh: *past the Mull of Kintyre, and into the Firth of Clyde*; bu sheann laoch Haco, a bha dà fhichead bliadhna 's a sia na rìgh air Lochlann: *Håkon was an old hero who had been king of Norway (Scandinavia) for 46 years*; leth sin a dh'aois: *half that age*; gum bu bhuanachd dha fhèin, 's gum bu chall do Haco: *that it was to his advantage and to Håkon's disadvantage*; a h-uile latha a b' urrainn e ... a chur seachad gun tòiseachadh air a' chogadh: *every day that he could ... spend without starting on the war*; a' feuchainn ri dàil a chur air an t-sabaid: *trying to delay the fighting*; a' tional shaighdearan às gach ceàrna: *collecting soldiers from each region*; mun cuairt dhen oirthir mu choinneimh nan luingeas: *around the coast facing the fleet*; a thuilleadh air sin: *in addition to that*; bha sùil aig X ris na h-eileamaidean fhèin a thighinn ga chòmhnadh: *X was expecting the elements to come to his aid*; shèid stoirm cho uabhasach 's cho obann: *a storm blew that was so terrible and sudden*; gum b' iad na ban-draoidhean Albannach a bha a' togail na gaoithe: *that it was the Scottish sorceresses that were raising the wind*; a' ruith suas an caolas ron ghaoith: *running up the firth ahead of [being driven by] the wind*; ag oidhirpeachadh air an dìon: *making efforts to protect them*; on tuath-cheathairn a bh' air dol fo armachd: *from the peasantry who were armed*; a' gabhail nam fàth air na Lochlannaich a chreachadh 's a mharbhadh: *taking the opportunity to plunder and kill the Norse*; ag iadhadh mun timcheall gu neo-sgàthach, colganta: *surrounding them fearlessly and fiercely*; sguab iad na h-eilthirich sìos romhpa gu beul na mara: *they swept the incomers ahead of them to the sea*.

**Puing-chànain na Litreach:** a' sgailceadh ri chèile **san oidhche dhùdlaidh dhuirch**: *being battered together on the gloomy dark night*. Dùdlaidh 'dark, gloomy sad' is reckoned by some to be the root of the Gaelic for December, commonly An Dùbhlachd, but also in some places An Dùdlachd ie 'the gloomy time'. Dorch is both lenited and slenderised (to become dhuirch) because oidhche, a feminine noun, is in the dative singular case with the article.

**Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach:** *thug an laoch òg an car ...às an t-seann laoch: the young hero deceived the old hero.*

*Tha "Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh" air a maoinachadh le MG ALBA*