

# Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

## Uilleam Ruighe 'n Uidhe

*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 881. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 577 corresponds to Litir 881.*

An cuala sibh riamh mun bhàrd Ghàidhlig Uilleam Ruighe 'n Uidhe? *William Gow* ann am Beurla. Bha e beò aig deireadh an ochdamh linn deug. Bhuineadh e do Ruighe 'n Uidhe ann an Srath Spè – seann bhaile-fearainn eadar An Gleann Mòr agus Obar Neithich. Bha e gu math ainmeil ri a linn, gu h-àraidh anns an sgìre far am biodh e a' sealg – Am Monadh Ruadh. Leis gun robh e na bhàrd agus na shealgair, gu tric bhiodh e a' sgrìobhadh bàrdachd mu shealg.

Uaireannan, bhiodh e ri sealg le cead an uachdarain, gu h-àraidh air taobh an iar-thuath a' Mhonaidh Ruaidh, ann an Rat Mhurchais is àiteachan mar sin. Ach bhiodh e ri poidseadh cuideachd, gu h-àraidh air taobh eile a' mhonaidh ann am Màrr agus Doire. Bhiodh e a' togail bothain shìmplidh dha fhèin a-muigh sa mhonadh.

Tha mi a' dol a leughadh piosan à dàn a sgrìobh Uilleam mu dheidhinn sealg nam fiadh anns a' Mhonaidh Ruadh:

*Och, gur mi tha muladach  
Sa mhonadh, 's mi leam fhèin,  
'S mi bhi 'tàmh an cròdhan beag  
Bothain 'thog mi 'm fheum;  
Cha robh spaid no tuagh agam,  
No ball mun cuairt dom làimh,  
Ach a' bhiodag làidir bharrach-chaol  
'S ann leatha bhuaib mi 'm fàl.*

Anns an dàrna rann, tha Uilleam ag ainmeachadh 'a' Bhan-Ghranndach' – *'the Grant maiden'*. Tha e a' ciallachadh a ghunna. 'S e an cleachdadh a bh' aig na Gàidheil o shean a bhith a' cur ainm boireann air gunna. Chì sibh anns an rann seo gun robh pùdar – no fùdar – a' ghunna feumail airson teine a chur thuige, agus gun robh i gu math fuar shuas sa mhonadh:

*Tha na h-osanan air reothadh orm,  
Mun tèid a' cheòthag suas,  
Tha gaoth is cur is cathadh ann,  
'S e gabhail domh sa chluais;  
Ach glacaidh mis' Bhan-Ghranndach seo,  
A tha nam làimh san uair,  
Is fadaidh is' an teine dhomh,  
Le fùdar sgeireach cruaidh.*

Nise, tha fios againn bho dhàn ainmeil eile – 'Allt an Lochain Uaine' – gun do thog Uilleam bothan ri taobh an uillt sin – ann an ceann shuas Gleann Doire. Mu choinneimh sin, air taobh an ear a' ghlinne, tha an Glas-allt. Ma leanas tu an Glas-allt suas, ruigidh tu mònteach àrd. Air an taobh eile dhen mhòintich tha an Dubh-ghleann no Dubh-ghleannan, far a bheil coille-ghiuthais nàdarach fhathast. Tha Uilleam ag ainmeachadh nan àiteachan sin anns a' cheathramh rann. Mar sin, tha fios againn cà' robh e a' sealg:

*'S mur faigh anns a' Ghlas-allt,*

*Na fir aigeannach tha bhuam,  
Ma ruigeas mi an Dùbh-ghleannan,  
Is bràigh nan stùc tha shuas;  
Siridh mi gu cothromach  
Gach coire dhiubh is bruthach,  
'S cha chuir mi às a h-aon dhiubh,  
Ma dh'fhaodas le gaoth-chuairt.*

Bha e a' poidseadh air **fearann a bhuineadh don Mhorair Fìobha** – *Lord Fife*, a tha e ag ainmeachadh san dàn. Bha e ann cho tric, 's gun robh botal de dh'uisge-beatha aige 'fo shop aig bun bruthaich'. Bhiodh e ga lorg gu furasta oir bha e mion-eòlach air na beanntan sin. Seo an rann mu dheireadh:

*'S nuair shuidheas mi air socair,  
'S gun dosgair bhith ri luaidh,  
Bheir mi làmh air botal  
Tha fon t-sop am bun na bruthaich;  
'S ma thachras do na companaich  
Bhith làimh rium anns an uair,  
"Lord Fife is damh na cròice" –  
An deoch-slàinte thèid mun cuairt.*

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**Faclan na Litreach:** Ruighe 'n Uidhe: *Rynuie*; Am Monadh Ruadh: *The Cairngorms*; Rat Mhurchais: *Rothiemurchus*; muladach: *sad*; ceòthag: *small smoke*; Gleann Doire: *Glen Derry*; deoch-slàinte: *toast (drink)*.

**Abairtean na Litreach:** deireadh an ochdamh linn deug: *the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century*; seann bhaile-fearainn eadar An Gleann Mòr agus Obar Neithich: *an old farm between Glenmore and Abernethy*; gun robh e na bhàrd agus na shealgair: *that he was a poet and hunter*; cead an uachdarain: *the landlord's permission*; bhiodh e ri poidseadh: *he would go poaching*; sa mhonadh, 's mi leam fhèin: *on the mountain by myself*; [a'] tàmh an cròdhan beag, bothain 'thog mi 'm fheum: *dwelling in a little pen of a bothy I built in my need*; ball mun cuairt dom làimh: *a tool around to my hand*; a' bhiodag làidir bharrach-chaol: *the strong, narrow-pointed dirk*; bhuaibh mi 'm fàl: *I cut the turf*; a bhith a' cur ainm boireann air gunna: *to give a gun a feminine name*; airson teine a chur thuige: *to light a fire*; tha na h-osanan air reothadh orm: *the hose have frozen on me*; tha cur is cathadh ann: *it is snowing and blizzarding*; [a'] gabhail d[h]omh sa chluais: *assailing me in the ear*; fadaidh is' an teine dhomh, le fùdar sgeireach cruaidh: *she will kindle the fire for me, with gritty hard powder*; na fir aigeannach tha bhuam: *the lively ones I want*; bràigh nan stùc tha shuas: *the upland of the jutting peaks to the west*; cha chuir mi às a h-aon dhiubh, ma dh'fhaodas le gaoth-chuairt: *I won't kill [only] one of them if I might with an eddying wind*; fo shop aig bun bruthaich: *under a wisp [of grass] at the bottom of a slope*; gun dosgair bhith ri luaidh: *without recounting a misfortune*; Lord Fife is damh na cròice: *[a toast to] Lord Fife and the antlered stag*.

**Puing-chànain na Litreach:** **fearann a bhuineadh don Mhorair Fìobha:** *land that belonged to Lord Fife. The lords of Fife were important in medieval Scotland and the title (Earl of Fife) was revived in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. Their name appears to be preserved in a very important landmark in the Cairngorms – but not as Fìobh or Fife. Their family name was Duff or MacDuibh and it is likely that Scotland's second highest mountain, Beinn MacDuibh, commemorates the clan.*

**Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach:** *Bhith làimh rium anns an uair: to be near to me at that time.*

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