

# Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

## Clach Oisein

*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.maclea@bbc.co.uk](mailto:rodny.maclea@bbc.co.uk). This is Litir 957. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 653 corresponds to Litir 957.*

Bha muinntir na Gàidhealtachd uaireigin uabhasach fhèin measail air sgeulachdan na Fèinne. Tha mi an dòchas gum bi a-rithist! Tha mi airson innse dhuibh mu thachartas eachdraidheil a tha a’ dearbhadh sin. Tha e co-cheangailte ris a’ Chaol-ghleann – no *Sma’ Glen* – ann an Siorrachd Pheairt.

O chionn beagan bhliadhnaichean bha **seann charaid dhomh** faisg air Glaschu ann an droch shlàinte. Bhithinn a’ dol suas is sìos an rathad eadar Inbhir Nis is Glaschu gu tric airson taic a thoirt dhi. Dh’fhàs mi sgìth de na rathaidean mòra trang, gu h-àraidh eadar Peairt is Glaschu. Uaireannan bhithinn a’ falbh air rathaidean beaga sgìreil tro Obar Pheallaidh, co-dhiù nuair nach robh sneachd na laighe.

Tha an t-slighe a ghabh mi a’ dol tron Chaol-ghleann – àite brèagha le abhainn a’ sruthadh troimhe. ’S e àite eachdraidheil a th’ ann cuideachd. Bhiodh armailtean a’ dol tron ghleann gu tric nuair a bha iad a’ dol eadar ceann a tuath agus ceann a deas na h-Alba.

Cha b’ fhada gus am faca mi gun robh clach iongantach anns a’ ghleann – tè mhòr car faisg air an rathad. ’S e Clach Oisein a chanas daoine rithe – agus tha i gu math aithnichte, ged as e *Giant’s Grave* a th’ air cuid de na mapaichean, seach Clach Oisein. Ach carson as e Clach Oisein a th’ oirre? Uill, bha na seann daoine a’ cumail a-mach gun robh Oisean – mac Fhinn MhicCumhail agus sàr-bhàrd nan Gàidheal – air a thiodhlacadh **foidhpe**.

A rèir choltais bha na Gàidheil cianail measail air a’ chloich. Bha i an ìre mhath naomh dhaibh, chanainn. Chuala Uilleam Wordsworth mu a deidhinn nuair a bha esan air spleoid ann an Alba aig toiseach an naoidheamh linn deug. Seo pìos a sgrìobh e, agus tha e inntinneach gur e *narrow glen* seach *small glen* a tha e a’ gabhail air an àite. Tha sin na eadar-theangachadh dìreach air caol-ghleann: *In this still place remote from men, sleeps Ossian in the Narrow Glen ... He sung of battles and the breath, Of stormy war and violent death ...*

Ach, nuair a bha Wordsworth ann, cha robh a’ chlach anns an àite san robh i bho thùs. Nuair a bha an Seanalair Wade a’ togail rathaidean air a’ Ghàidhealtachd, cho-dhùin sgioba einnseanairidh aige gun robh Clach Oisein anns an rathad orra. Ghluais iad i a-mach às an rathad.

Bha muinntir an àite air an tàmailteachadh. Nach robh fios aig luchd-togail nan rathaidean gun robh cnàmhan air an tiodhlacadh fon chloich? Cnàmhan Oisein. Chaidh buidheann de mhuinntir an àite, le pìobaire air an ceann, gu seann làrach na cloiche. Chladhaich iad na cnàmhan suas, agus thiodhlaic iad a-rithist iad ann am

badeigin eile faisg air làimh. Loisg iad an gunnaichean os cionn na h-uaghach ùir. Ach càite a bheil an uaigh ùr? Chan eil fhios a'm.

Sgrìobh an Caiptean Edmund Burt mun chùis anns na litrichean aige. Bha na Gàidheil a' creidsinn gun tigeadh gailleann sgriosail a dhèanadh cron orra mura robh na cnàmhan air an ath-thiodhlacadh fon fhòid.

Tha an naidheachd seo a' tighinn à leabhar fìor mhath a thàinig a-mach o chionn ghoirid, agus a tha a' toirt sùil gheur air a' chàirdeas eadar na Gàidheil agus a' Ghàidhealtachd tron litreachas aca – '*Literature of the Gaelic Landscape*' le Iain Moireach. Bidh tuilleadh agam mun leabhar seo an-ath-sheachdain.

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**Faclan na Litreach:** An Caol-ghleann: *The Sma' Glen*; Clach Oisein: '*Ossian's stone*'; air splaoid: *on a trip, spree*; chladhaich: *dug*; fon fhòid: *under the ground [turf]*; Iain Moireach: *John Murray*.

**Abairtean na Litreach:** Bha muinntir na Gàidhealtachd uaireigin uabhasach fhèin measail air sgeulachdan na Fèinne: *the people of the Highlands were at one time very keen on the Fingalian legends*; mu thachartas eachdraidheil a tha a' dearbhadh sin: *about a historical occurrence that proves that*; dh'fhàs mi sgìth de na rathaidean mòra: *I grew tired of the main roads*; air rathaidean beaga sgìreil tro Obar Pheallaidh: *on small local roads through Aberfeldy*; co-dhiù nuair nach robh sneachd na laighe: *at least when there was no snow lying*; àite brèagha le abhainn a' sruthadh troimhe: *a beautiful place with a river flowing through it*; mac Fhinn MhicCumhail agus sàr-bhàrd nan Gàidheal: *son of Fionn MacCumhail and great bard of the Gaels*; bha i an ìre mhath naomh dhaibh, chanainn: *it was almost sacred to them, I'd say*; anns an àite san robh i bho thùs: *in the place it originally was*; cho-dhùin sgioba einnseanairidh aige gun robh Clach Oisein anns an rathad orra: *an engineering team of his concluded that Clach Oisein was in their way*; air an tàmailteachadh: *horrified*; gun robh cnàmhan air an tiodhlacadh fon chloich: *that bones were buried under the stone*; thiodhlaic iad a-rithist iad ann am badeigin eile faisg air làimh: *they buried them again in another place close by*; loisg iad an gunnaichean os cionn na h-uaghach: *they fired their guns above the grave*; bha X a' creidsinn gun tigeadh gailleann sgriosail a dhèanadh cron orra: *X were believing that a destructive storm would come that would damage them*; a tha a' toirt sùil gheur air a' chàirdeas eadar na Gàidheil agus a' Ghàidhealtachd tron litreachas aca: *that closely examines the relationship between the Gaels and the Gàidhealtachd through their literature*.

**Puing-chànain na Litreach:** bha seann charaid dhomh faisg air Glaschu ann an droch shlàinte: *an elderly relative of mine close to Glasgow was in poor health. The preposition do (dha) can be used instead of aig to express 'ownership' and this type of usage is quite common in some dialects [instead of saying seann charaid agam].*

**Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach:** air a thiodhlacadh foidhpe: *buried under it [her]. Clach is a feminine noun.*

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