

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Cath Ghlinn Freòin (1)

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. This is Litir 1,051. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 748 corresponds to Litir 1,052.

An cuala sibh riamh mu Chath Ghlinn Freòin? Tha Gleann Freòin – Glen Fruin – siar air ceann a deas Loch Laomainn. Thachair an cath anns a’ bhliadhna sia ceud deug ’s a trì (1603). Thug e buaidh mhòr air Clann Ghriogair. Tha mi airson innse dhuibh mu dheidhinn.

Bha bantrach a bha seo a’ fuireach ann an Gleann Sratha faisg air Clachan an Diseirt – no Dail Mhàilidh mar a chanas mòran an-diugh. ’S e ban-Ghriogarach a bh’ innte. Bha dithis mhac aice. Bha iad nan giullain òga ach bha iad tapaidh. Bha iad a’ ceannach bathar anns na bailtean Gallta agus ga reic air a’ Ghàidhealtachd.

Turas a bha seo, chaidh iad a Dhùn Bhreatann a cheannach bathar. Nuair a bha iad air an rathad dhachaigh thàinig cur is cathadh orra. Ràinig iad Lus. Bhiodh e do-dhèante leantainn orra dhachaigh oir bha an sneachd ro throm. Mar sin, roghnaich iad a dhol tarsainn Loch Laomainn airson a bhith am measg am muinntir fhèin – Griogaraich – a bha pailt air taobh sear an locha.

Ge-tà, bha coltas stoirmeil air an aimsir, agus cha robh aon duine deònach an toirt a-null. Dh’fhaighnich cuid ann an Lus dhiubh, ‘**Cò an cinneadh dham buin sibh?**’ Cha robh fios aig na gillean **gun robh gamhlas aig muinntir Luis ris** na Griogaraich. Agus dh’aidich iad gur e Griogaraich a bh’ annta. An uair sin, chan fhaigheadh iad biadh no àite-fuirich. Lean iad orra gu baile beag eile tuath air Lus, ris an canar a’ Chaolag.

Bha aiseag an sin, ach dhiùlt luchd an aiseig na Griogaraich a thoirt tarsainn an locha. Agus, a-rithist, cha d’ fhuair na balaich àite-fuirich no biadh. Bha iad ann an suidheachadh doirbh, le sneachd air an talamh. Mu dheireadh, ann an dorchadas na h-oidhche, ràinig iad taigh-ghobhar far an robh fiodh tioram. Thog iad teine. Agus bhris iad crann-treabhaidh airson cur air an teine.

Bha an t-acras cho mòr air an dithis, agus iad gun bhiadh, ’s gun do mharbh iad molt dubh aig an robh earball geal. Ròist iad earrann dhen fheòil agus dh’ith iad i.

Leis gur e Griogaraich a bh’ annta, bha feadhainn air a bhith a’ cumail sùil orra. Chunnaic iad mar a bhris na gillean an crann-treabhaidh agus mar a mharbh iad am molt. Chaidh fios a chur air ais don cheann-cinnidh, Sir Umfra Mac a’ Chombaich. Thàinig gràisg goirid ron chamhanaich agus chuir iad na gillean fo ghlas.

Thàinig latha a’ chrochaidh agus bha sluagh aig Tom na Croiche deas air Lus. Nochd gràisg mhòr de Chlann ’ic Ghriogair cuideachd. Chaidh na gillean a chur air craobh-ghiuthais le ròpan timcheall an amhaichean. Chaidh rudeigin ceàrr, ge-tà. Thuit an dithis Ghriogarach don làr, agus iad fhathast beò.

Dh'èigh fear de na Griogaraich a bha a' coimhead a' ghnòthaich gum bu chòir do na prìosanaich a bhith air an leigeil mu sgaoil. B' e sin an cleachdadh aig an àm – nam biodh rudeigin a' dol ceàrr gum faigheadh am prìosanach a shaorsa.

Ach chuir Sir Umfra Mac a' Chombaich a dhaoine fhèin eadar na Griogaraich agus a' chroich. Chuir iad na ròpan suas a-rithist, agus chaidh an dithis mharsantach a chrochadh gus an robh iad marbh.

Bha sin dona gu leòr, ach dh'fhàs cùisean na bu mhiosa buileach, mar a chì sinn an-ath-sheachdain.

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Faclan na Litreach: Gleann Freòin: *Glen Fruin*; bantrach: *widow*; cur is cathadh: *snow and blizzard*; Lus: *Luss*; crann-treabhaidh: *plough*.

Abairtean na Litreach: siar air ceann a deas Loch Laomainn: *to the south of the southern end of Loch Lomond*; thug e buaidh mhòr air Clann Ghriogair: *it had a big effect on Clan Gregor*; Gleann Sratha faisg air Clachan an Dìseirt: *Glen Strae near Dalmally*; bha iad nan giullain òga ach bha iad tapaidh: *they were young lads but they were robust*; a' ceannach bathar anns na bailtean Gallta agus ga reic air a' Ghàidhealtachd: *buying goods in the Lowland towns and selling them in the Highlands*; a Dhùn Bhreatann a cheannach bathar: *to Dumbarton to buy goods*; bhiodh e do-dhèante leantainn orra dhachaigh oir bha an sneachd ro throm: *it would be impossible to continue homewards because the snow was too heavy*; roghnaich iad a dhol tarsainn Loch Laomainn airson a bhith am measg am muinntir fhèin: *they chose to cross Loch Lomond to be among their own people*; pailt air taobh sear an locha: *plentiful on the eastern side of the loch*; dhiùlt luchd an aiseig na Griogaraich a thoirt tarsainn an locha: *the ferry operators refused to take the MacGregors across the loch*; ràinig iad taigh-ghobhar far an robh fiodh tioram: *they reached a goat-house where there was dry wood*; gun do mharbh iad molt dubh aig an robh earball geal: *that they killed a black wether that had a white tail*; ròist iad earrann dhen fheòil: *they roasted a part of the meat*; chaidh fios a chur air ais don cheann-cinnidh, Sir Umfra Mac a' Chombaich: *information was sent back to the clan chief, Sir Humphrey Colquhoun*; thàinig gràisg goirid ron chamhanaich: *a group of men came shortly before dawn*; le ròpan timcheall an amhaichean: *with ropes around their necks*; nam biodh rudeigin a' dol ceàrr gum faigheadh am prìosanach a shaorsa: *if anything went wrong, that the prisoner would receive his freedom*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: **Cò an cinneadh dham buin sibh?:** *which clan do you belong to?* Cinneadh has several meanings – clan, kindred, tribe, race and even surname (rather than sloinneadh which is more properly a patronymic or matronymic). It is the best modern word to refer to the 'clan' you belong to. The word fine is also used but perhaps less commonly today – although it is still the default plural form to talk about 'the clans' (na fineachan).

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: **gun robh gamhlas aig muinntir Luis ris na Griogaraich:** *that the people of Luss bore animosity to the MacGregors.*

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