

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

An Iolair-mhara

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.macleam@bbc.co.uk. This is Litir 1,079. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 775 corresponds to Litir 1,079.

Ann an Litir mu dheireadh, bha mi ag innse dhuibh mu Loch an Iasgair faisg air an Fhionn Loch, agus mar a tha an t-ainm a’ ciallachadh ‘loch na h-iolair-uisge’. Ann an leabhar aige *A Hundred Years in the Highlands*, tha Osgood MacCoinnich ag innse dhuinn cuideachd mu iolair eile anns an sgìre aig an àm sin – an iolair-mhara.

Bha eilean anns an Fhionn Loch air an robh Eilean na h-Iolaire. B’ e sin an t-ainm a bh’ air gu h-ionadail, co-dhiù, oir chan eil e air mapaichean na Suirbhidh Òrdanais. Ged a bha craobhan beaga san eilean, ’s ann air mullach creige a bha na h-iolairean-mara a’ neadachadh. Ge-tà, cho luath ’s a chuir Osgood is a chàirdean bàta beag anns an loch airson iasgach, cha robh an nead sàbhailte tuilleadh. Bhiodh daoine a’ falbh a ghoid nan uighean às an nead.

Air sgàth sin, dh’fhalbh na h-iolairean-mara, agus thog iad nead ùr gu h-àrd anns na beanntan – air sgòr air Beinn Àirigh a’ Charr deas air an Fhionn Loch. Bhiodh na h-eòin, ’s cinnteach, dhen bheachd gun robh iad sàbhailte an sin. Ach cha do thuig iad cho dealasach ’s a bha Osgood MacCoinnich is feadhainn eile mar mhèirlich uighean. Tha e doirbh an cunntas aige a leughadh, no a thoirt seachad dhuibh, gun a bhith a’ fàs feargach, ach **nì mi mo dhìcheall!**

Seo agaibh **m’ eadar-theangachadh** air an earrainn dhen leabhar anns a bheil MacCoinnich a’ dèanamh tuairisgeul dhen ghnòthach. *‘Nuair nach robh mi ach seachd no ochd bliadhna a dh’aois, bha mi mu-thrath an sàs ann an goid uighean, agus bha mi miannach air feadhainn aig an iolair-mhara, a bha riamh gann anns an sgìre seo, ged a bha na h-iolairean-buidhe pailt. Cha robh mi eòlach air ach aon àite-neadachaidh eile aig an iolair-mhara air a’ chosta seo, far an robh iad a’ neadachadh air creag os cionn na mara gu o chionn ghoirid. Cha tug mi fois gu mo mhàthair gus an robh i air turas a chur air dòigh don nead; bha e dìreach thairis air crìoch ar n-oighreachd ach, le cead bho ar nàbaidh, chaidh sinn ann air muin-eich, le sreapadair comasach agus ròpan nar cois.’*

Tha an cunntas a’ leantainn, agus MacCoinnich is a chompanaich a’ ruigsinn an lic air an robh an nead. Ach cha deach an ghnòthach leotha. Bha na h-uighean air an goid mu-thrath. An latha roimhe, bha an cìobair air an oighreachd, air an robh an nead, air a dhol ann. Thug e na h-uighean leis airson reic, oir bha e air cluinntinn gun robh luach annta. ’S e Jock Beatie an t-ainm a bh’ air an duine, agus bhuineadh e do cheann a deas na h-Alba. Tha Osgood ag innse dhuinn gun robh gràin aige fhèin air a’ chìobair air sàillibh na mèirle.

Ge-tà, bhuineadh Osgood do na h-uaislean, agus bha airgead aige. Thug e airgead gu Mgr Beatie agus thug an ciobair na h-uighean seachad. Chaidh MacCoinnich dhachaigh leis na h-uighean mòra, bàna, agus toileachas na chridhe. Ma tha sibh a' coimhead airson faclan aithreachais aige mun sgrios a rinn e, bidh sibh air siubhal gun siùcar. Cha b' fhada gus an deach an iolair-mhara à bith ann an Alba. Coltach ris an iolair-uisge, ge-tà, tha i air tilleadh a dh'Alba, agus chithear anns an sgìre sin a-rithist i.

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Faclan na Litreach: iolair-uisge: *osprey*; sgòr: *a finger of rock*; iolair-mhara: *sea eagle*; muin-eich: *horseback*.

Abairtean na Litreach: chan eil e air mapaichean na Suirbhuidh Òrdanais: *it's not on Ordnance Survey maps*; 's ann air mullach creige a bha na h-iolairean-mara a' neadachadh: *it's on top of rock that the sea eagles were nesting*; cho luath 's a chuir X bàta beag anns an loch, cha robh an nead sàbhailte tuilleadh: *as soon as X put a small boat on the loch, the nest was no longer safe*; a' falbh a ghoid nan uighean às an nead: *going to steal the eggs from the nest*; cha do thuig iad cho dealasach 's a bha X mar mhèirlich uighean: *they didn't understand how zealous X were as egg thieves*; gun a bhith a' fàs feargach: *without getting angry*; bha mi miannach air feadhainn aig an iolair-mhara: *I greatly coveted those of the sea eagle*; a bha riamh gann anns an sgìre seo: *which were always rare in this district*; cha tug mi fois gu mo mhàthair gus an robh i air turas a chur air dòigh don nead: *I gave my mother no peace until she had arranged an expedition to the nest*; thairis air crìoch ar n-oighreachd: *beyond the march (boundary) of our estate*; a' ruigsinn an lic: *reaching the ledge*; cha deach an gnothach leotha: *they didn't succeed*; bha e air cluinntinn gun robh luach annta: *he had heard they were valuable*; bhuineadh e do cheann a deas na h-Alba: *he belonged to the south of Scotland*; gun robh gràin aige fhèin air a' chìobair air sàillibh na mèirle: *that he hated the shepherd because of the robbery*; airson faclan aithreachais aige mun sgrios a rinn e: *for words of regret about the damage he did*; bidh sibh air siubhal gun siùcar: *you'll be on a wild goose chase*; chithear anns an sgìre sin a-rithist i: *it can be seen in the area again*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: Seo agaibh **m' eadar-theangachadh**: *here is my translation [for you]*. Note that when a possessive pronoun like *mo 'my'* or *do 'your'* is in front of a noun that begins with a vowel, we drop the vowel from both writing and speech. But note also that, in writing, we leave a space between the apostrophe and the noun. Other examples are *m' ad 'my hat'*; *d' obair 'your work'*; *m' uchd 'my bosom'*; *fo d' achlais 'under your armpit'*.

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: *nì mi mo dhìcheall: I'll do my best [I'll make an effort]*.

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