

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Craoibh ann am bàrdachd

Each week the West Highland Free Press publishes the text for Ruairidh's "Letter to Gaelic Learners" on BBC Radio nan Gàidheal (103.5-105 FM). Broadcasts are as follows: 2:55pm on Sunday as part of BBC Radio nan Gàidheal's hour-long learning zone, following the Gaelic Learners' programme 'SpeakGaelic Extra', with a repeat at 10.30 pm on Wednesday. This is Litir 1,230. There is also a simpler version – An Litir Bheag – which is broadcast at 2:30pm each Sunday. Litir Bheag 926 corresponds to Litir 1,230. The Litir is also available at www.bbc.co.uk/litir and www.learnghaelic.scot/litir. Ruairidh can be contacted at fios@learnghaelic.scot.

Tha na faclairan ag innse dhuinn gur e 'Craoibh' a' Ghàidhlig a th' air Crieff. Mura h-eil sibh eòlach air, 's e baile snog a th' ann, ann an Siorrachd Pheairt. 'S ann an Ghàidhlig a thàinig ainm a' bhaile. Is toigh leam e oir tha mi gu math measail air craobhan!

Ciamar a chanas sinn, ma-thà, 'in Crieff' agus 'of Crieff'? Uill, airson 'in Crieff', canaidh sinn '**ann an Craoibh**' no dìreach '**an Craoibh**'. Tha fios agam air sin oir tha e a' nochdadh ann am bàrdachd Ghàidhlig anns an ochdamh linn deug. Bha i air a sgrìobhadh le fear a **bha thall 's a chunnaic**. Agus bhuineadh am fear sin do sgìre cho fad air falbh bho Chraoibh 's as urrainn a bhith air tìr-mòr na h-Alba.

B' e am bàrd Rob Donn, bàrd Ghàidhlig cho ainmeil 's a bh' againn ann an Alba anns an ochdamh linn deug. Bhuineadh e do Dhùthaich MhicAoidh ann an ceann an iar-thuath na Gàidhealtachd. Aig an àm sin, bha an sgìre sin cho Gàidhealach ri àite sam bith ann an Alba. Ciamar a bha Rob eòlach air Craoibh? Uill, am measg eile, 's e dròbhair a bh' ann. Bhiodh e a' falbh le crodh gu ruige Craoibh, far an robh fèill-reic gu math mòr a h-uile bliadhna.

Sgrìobh Rob 'n Craoibh' airson 'in Crieff' agus 'Chraoibh' airson 'of Crieff'. Nuair a bha e ann an Craoibh, bhiodh a smuaintean a' dol air ais don dùthaich aige fhèin. Bha gràdh mòr aige air na frithean ann an Dùthaich MhicAoidh. Seo agaibh earrann de dhàn a sgrìobh e:

'S toigh leam càradh na frithe, Ged a tha mi 'n Craoibh air bhòrd lom, Eadar badaidh nan caorach, Agus aonach nan tom ...

Tha mi airson a dhol troimhe seo leibh. 'S toigh leam càradh na frithe: *I like the condition or environment of the deer-forest. Ged a tha mi 'n Craoibh air bhòrd lom: although I am in Crieff on a bare board* (b' e sin a leabaidh). Eadar badaidh nan caorach agus aonach nan tom: *between the sheep thickets and the hillocky upland.*

Agus seo agaibh earrann eile car air an aon chuspair: *Ged as socrach mo leabaidh, Chan e 'n cadal bh' air m' ùidh, 'S tric mo smuaintean a' gluasad, Don taobh tuath leis a' ghaoith; 'S mòr a b' annsa bhith mar riut, Ann an gleannan nan laogh, Na bhith cunntadh nan Sàileach, Ann am pàirceachan Chraoibh.*

Ged as socrach mo leabaidh: *although my bed is comfortable; Chan e 'n cadal bh' air m' ùidh: I had no interest in sleep; 'S tric mo smuaintean a' gluasad don taobh tuath leis a' ghaoith: often my thoughts go with the wind to the North; 'S mòr a b'*

annsa bhith mar riut: *I would love to be with you*. Ann an gleannan nan laogh: *in the wee glen of the calves*. Na bhith cunntadh nan Sàileach ann am pàirceachan Chraoibh: *than to be counting the Sàilich in the parks [or grazing fields] of Crieff*.

Fhad 's as aithne dhomh, tha 'Sàilich' a' ciallachadh crodh a bh' air an togail ann an sgìre air robh, uaireigin, *Ceann-sàile* no ann am Beurla, *Kintail*. Sin far a bheil 'Caolas Thunga' an-diugh. Fada, gu dearbh, bho Chraoibh.

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Faclan na Litreach: faclair: *dictionaries*; Craoibh: *Crieff*; Dùthaich MhicAoidh: *the Mackay country (North Sutherland)*; dròbhair: *drover*.

Abairtean na Litreach: 's e baile snog a th' ann, ann an Siorrachd Pheairt: *it's a nice town, in Perthshire*; 's ann on Ghàidhlig a thàinig ainm a' bhaile: *it's from Gaelic that the name of the town came*; tha mi gu math measail air craobhan: *I really like trees*; tha fios agam air sin le cinnt oir tha e a' nochdadh ann am bàrdachd Ghàidhlig: *I know that for sure because it appears in Gaelic poetry*; bhuineadh am fear sin do sgìre cho fad air falbh bho Chraoibh 's as urrainn a bhith air tìr-mòr na h-Alba: *that man belonged to an area as far away from Crieff as it is possible to be on the mainland of Scotland*; b' e am bàrd Rob Donn: *the bard was Rob Donn (brown-haired Rob)*; bàrd Gàidhlig cho ainmeil 's a bh' againn ann an Alba anns an ochdamh linn deug: *as famous a Gaelic bard as we had in Scotland in the eighteenth century*; bhuineadh e do: *he belonged to*; a' falbh le crodh gu ruige Craoibh, far an robh fèill-reic gu math mòr a h-uile bliadhna: *going with cattle to Crieff, where there was a large sale every year*; bha gràdh mòr aige air na frìthean: *he loved the deer-forests*; fhad 's as aithne dhomh: *as far as I know*; tha 'Sàilich' a' ciallachadh crodh a bh' air an togail ann an X: *Sàilich means cattle that were raised in X*; ann an sgìre air robh, uaireigin, *Ceann-sàile* no ann am Beurla, *Kintail*: *in an area that was at one time called Ceann-sàile or in English Kintail*; sin far a bheil 'Caolas Thunga' an-diugh: *that's where the Kyle of Tongue is today*; fada, gu dearbh, bho Chraoibh: *a long way, indeed, from Crieff*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: canaidh sinn '**ann an Craoibh' no dìreach 'an Craoibh'**: *we say 'ann an Craoibh' or just 'an Craoibh'*. It's worth making the point that, although we say that the Gaelic for 'in' is 'ann an', there is some flexibility there and that sometimes we just say 'an' (to shorten the sentence). Tha mi an Glaschu 'I am in Glasgow'; tha i a' fuireach an Inbhir Nis 'she lives in Inverness'; tha iad air a bhith beò am bochdainn fad fichead bliadhna 'they have been living in poverty for twenty years'.

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: fear a bha thall 's a chunnaic: *a man who had first-hand knowledge/who knew all about it*.

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