

# Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

## Leann-fraoich (1)

*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 1,351. There is also a simpler version – An Litir Bheag – which is broadcast at 2:30pm each Sunday. Litir Bheag 1,047 corresponds to Litir 1,351. The Litir is also available at [www.bbc.co.uk/litir](http://www.bbc.co.uk/litir) and [www.learnghaelic.scot/litir](http://www.learnghaelic.scot/litir). Ruairidh can be contacted at [fios@learnghaelic.scot](mailto:fios@learnghaelic.scot).*

Ann an Litir mu dheireadh, dh'inns mi sgeulachd thraidiseanta à Gall-Ghàidhealaibh. Tha tè eile agam dhuibh an t-seachdain seo, agus tha i gu math inntinneach oir tha i mu dheidhinn leann-fraoich. A bheil sibh a' tuigsinn sin? Leann-fraoich. *Heather ale.*

Bha fios aig na Cruithnich air mar a dhèanadh tu leann dhen t-seòrsa sin, a rèir beul-aithris co-dhiù. Ach chùm iad an reasabaidh diomhair. Agus thug iad leotha i don t-siorraidheachd. Thachair sin aig Maol Ghall-Ghàidheil, *The Mull of Galloway*.

Tha an sgeulachd gu math aithnichte oir sgrìobh an t-ùghdar ainmeil, Raibeart Louis Stevenson, dàn mu dheidhinn, air a bheil *Heather Ale: A Galloway Legend*.

Tha an sgeul a' dol air ais don cheathramh linn an dèidh Chrìosd. Bha Niall Naoi-ghiallach na àrd-rìgh ann an Èirinn. Thathar ag ràdh gun robh an suidheachadh poiliteagach aige cho fàbharach 's gun robh e sàbhailte dha falbh **a-null thairis**. Thug e armailt leis a Bhreatainn, far an tug e ionnsaigh air na Ròmanaich. Agus a rèir an sgeòil seo, thug e ionnsaigh air na Cruithnich a bha fhathast a' riaghladh ann an ceann an iar-dheas na h-Alba – dùthaich ris an canar Gall-Ghàidhealaibh an-diugh.

Bha na Gàidheil Èireannach na bu chumhachdaiche na na Cruithnich. Dh'iomain iad na Cruithnich a-mach à Gall-Ghàidhealaibh. Mharbh iad gu leòr dhiubh. Cha robh air fhàgail ach aon treubh anns na Rannaibh – an rubha mòr dà-cheannach air taobh an iar Ghall-Ghàidhealaibh. Tha an ceann as fhaide deas de na Rannaibh a' crìochnachadh aig Maol Gall-Ghàidheil, an t-àite **as fhaide deas** ann an Alba.

Nise, bha fear-brathaidh aig Niall Naoi-ghiallach air an robh An Sionnach mar ainm – no frìth-ainm. Bha e na Chruithneach agus bha e gu math fiosrachail mu dhòighean nan daoine sin. Bha e feumail do Niall, ach bha an t-Àrd-rìgh dhen bheachd gun robh an duine cealgach. Cha chuireadh e cus earbsa ann.

Bha Niall air a chur roimhe na Cruithnich gu lèir a bh' air fhàgail ann an Gall-Ghàidhealaibh a chur gu bàs. Ach thàinig an Sionnach thuige. Thuirt e ris an rìgh gun robh an fhine sin air a bhith a' dèanamh leann-fraoich bho linn chogadh nan con. Agus gur iad na h-aon daoine aig an robh an reasabaidh. Bha iad a' cumail sin diomhair. 'Nach biodh sibh fhèin ag iarraidh an reasabaidh dhìomhair fhaighinn bhuapa?' dh'fhaighnich an Sionnach dhen rìgh.

Mheòraich Niall air an t-suidheachadh. Gu dearbh, bhiodh e math dìomhaireachd mar sin a bhith aige. Chuir e teachdaire a bhruidhinn ris na Cruithnich. Dh'inns an teachdaire do na Cruithnich gun robh Niall Naoi-ghiallach, Àrd-rìgh na h-Èireann, deònach leigeil leotha maireachdainn beò nan innseadh iad dha mar a dhèanadh iad leann-fraoich.

Bha na Cruithnich gu math uasal. Bha iad air an reasabaidh a chumail dìomhair fad nan ceudan. Cha robh iad a' dol ga toirt seachad do dhuine sam bith.

Ghabh Niall an caothach. Dh'òrdaich e gum biodh a h-uile duine de na Cruithnich air an cur gu bàs. Chì sinn dè thachair nuair a bheir mi an sgeul gu crìch an-ath-sheachdain.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Faclan na Litreach:** Gall-Ghàidhealaibh: *Galloway*; leann-fraoich: *heather ale*; Maol Ghall-Ghàidheil: *The Mull of Galloway*; gu math aithnichte: *well-known*; na Rannaibh: *The Rhinns [of Galloway]*; fear-brathaidh: *spy*; Niall Naoi-ghiallach: *Neil of the nine hostages*; An Sionnach: *the fox*; frìth-ainm: *nickname*.

**Abairtean na Litreach:** Bha fios aig na Cruithnich air mar a dhèanadh tu leann dhen t-seòrsa sin: *the Picts knew how to make ale of that sort*; chùm iad an reasabaidh dìomhair: *they kept the recipe secret*; thug iad leotha i don t-siorraidheachd: *they took it with them to oblivion*; don cheathramh linn an dèidh Chrìosda: *to the fourth century after Christ*; gun robh an suidheachadh poilitigeach aige cho fàbharach: *that his political situation was so favourable*; thug e armailt leis a Bhreatainn, far an tug e ionnsaigh air na Ròmanaich: *he took an army with him to Britain, where he attacked the Romans*; bha na Gàidheil Èireannach na bu chumhachdaiche na na Cruithnich: *the Irish Gaels were more powerful than the Picts*; an rubha mòr dà-cheannach air taobh an iar Ghall-Ghàidhealaibh: *the big double-headed peninsula on the western side of Galloway*; bha an t-Àrd-rìgh dhen bheachd gun robh an duine cealgach: *the high king considered the man to be deceitful*; cha chuireadh e cus earbsa ann: *he wouldn't put too much faith in him*; gun robh an fhine sin air a bhith a' dèanamh leann-fraoich bho linn chogadh nan con: *that that clan had been making heather ale since ancient times*; gur iad na h-aon daoine aig an robh an reasabaidh: *that they were the only people who had the recipe*; mheòraich Niall air an t-suidheachadh: *Neil considered the situation*; ghabh X an caothach: *X became very angry*; dh'òrdaich e gum biodh a h-uile duine de na Cruithnich air an cur gu bàs: *he ordered that all the Picts be put to death*.

**Puing-chànain na Litreach:** gun robh e sàbhailte dha falbh a-null thairis: *that it was safe for him to go overseas. Note that the Gaelic for 'overseas' varies on circumstance. If you are referring to being overseas (and static) we say thall thairis. Bha mi a' fuireach thall thairis nuair a bha mi òg 'I was staying overseas when I was young'. However, if we are moving overseas (for whatever purpose) we say a-null thairis using a motion adverb. Bhiodh muinntir na Gàidhealtachd gu tric a' dol a-null thairis 'the people of the Highlands would often go overseas'.*

**Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach:** an t-àite as fhaide deas ann an Alba: *the furthest south place in Scotland*.

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