

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

A' Bhanarach agus an Sealgair (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 1,420. There is also a simpler version – An Litir Bheag – which is broadcast at 2:30pm each Sunday. Litir Bheag 1,116 corresponds to Litir 1,420. The Litir is also available at www.bbc.co.uk/litir and www.learnghaelic.scot/litir. Ruairidh can be contacted at fios@learnghaelic.scot.

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh mu Dhail a' Mhuilinn, no *Dalnawillan*, ann an Gallaibh. Bha Gàidhlig air a bruidhinn anns an sgìre sin fad ùine mhòr. Tha sin air a dhearbhadh leis na h-ainmean-àite. Tha a' chuid as motha dhiubh ann an Gàidhlig.

Leis gu bheil dualchas Gàidhealach ann, tha òrain agus sgeulachdan co-cheangailte ris an àite. Nam measg tha òran a bha ainmeil am measg nan Gàidheal ann an Gallaibh. Chaidh eadar-theangachadh a dhèanamh air an òran agus bha e aithnichte ann am Beurla mar '*Miss Calder's Lament*'.

Tha sgeulachd co-cheangailte ris an òran. Bu mhath leam sin innse dhuibh, no gearr-chunntas dhith co-dhiù. 'S e an t-ainm a th' oirre 'A' Bhanarach agus an Sealgair' – *The Dairymaid and the Hunter*.

Aig deireadh an t-siathamh linn deug, no math dh'fhaodte tràth anns an t-seachdamh linn deug, b' e Dòmhnall MacAoidh ceann-cinnidh Clann 'ic Aoidh ann an Srath Nabhair. Bha mac aige air an robh **Iain Bàn Mòr** mar ainm. Chaidh Iain agus cuid de a luchd-cinnidh a-mach air a chèile gu salach. B' fheudar do dh'Iain, a bhean agus an cuid cloinne Srath Nabhair fhàgail. Chaidh iad a dh'fhuireach ann an Gallaibh – ann an Dail a' Mhuilinn.

Bha Iain mòr agus làidir. Bha e na shealgair air leth. Bha e cuideachd gu math cràbhach. Gach Sàbaid, bhiodh e a' sreap gu mullach na beinne as fhaisge air Dail a' Mhuilinn – Beinn Alasgaidh. Sheasadh e air a' mhullach le cleòca dearg air. Chitheadh a nàbaidhean e agus thuigeadh iad gur e Latha na Sàbaid a bh' ann – agus nach bu chòir dhaibh a bhith a' dèanamh obair sam bith. A rèir aithris, bha Iain agus na ministearan a' faighinn air adhart gu math.

Latha a bha seo, bha Iain a' sealg sa mhonadh. Lorg e leanabh-gille a bha na chadal ann an lag fraoich. Shaoil Iain gun robh an leanabh air a chur ann leis na sìthichean. Bha sin airson deuchainn a dhèanamh air Iain. Dè dhèanadh e?

Bha Iain mion-eòlach air a' Bhìoball. Chuimhnich e na briathran ann an Leabhar Mhata, Caibideil 18, rannan 3 gu 5: 'Agus thuir [Ìosa], "... tha mi ag ràdh ribh, **mur iompaichear sibh**, agus mura bi sibh mar leanaban, nach tèid sibh a-steach a rìoghachd nèimh... Agus ge b' e a ghabhas aon leanabh de a leithid seo nam ainm-sa, gabhaidh e mise.'"

Thog Iain an leanabh agus thug e dhachaigh e. Bha dithis nighean agus triùir mhac aige mu thràth ach cha robh sin gu diofar. Chuir e roimhe gabhail ris a' ghille seo mar dhalta.

Nuair a bha e òg, dhearbha an gille gun robh e gu math treun agus làidir. Bha e uabhasach math air sealg, boghadaireachd agus carachd. Bha daoine a' gabhail 'An Gille Garbh' air. Math dh'fhaodte gun canamaid *'The Hefty Lad'* ann am Beurla. An Gille Garbh.

Latha a bha seo, nuair a bha an Gille Garbh na dheugaire, bha e a' sealg sa mhonadh. Chaidh e gu bothan-àirigh. Bha clann-nighean a' fuireach ann. Nam measg bha tè a th' air a cuimhneachadh an-diugh mar 'Miss Calder'. Innsidh mi dhuibh dè thachair anns an ath Litir.

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Faclan na Litreach: Dail a' Mhuilinn: *Dalnawillan*; Gallaibh: *Caithness*; cràbhach: *devout, religious*; Beinn Alasgaidh: *Ben Alisky*; cleòca: *cloak*; boghadaireachd: *archery*; carachd: *wrestling*; bothan-àirigh: *shieling bothy*.

Abairtean na Litreach: Nam measg tha òran a bha ainmeil am measg nan Gàidheal: *among them is a song that was famous among the Gaels*; chaidh eadar-theangachadh a dhèanamh air an òran agus bha e aithnichte ann am Beurla mar: *the song was translated and it was known in English as*; no geàrr-chunntas dhith co-dhiù: *or a shortened version of it, at least*; math dh'fhaodte tràth anns an t-seachdamh linn deug: *perhaps early in the 17th century*; b' e Dòmhnall MacAoidh ceann-cinnidh Clann 'ic Aoidh ann an Srath Nabhair: *Donald Mackay was the chief of the Mackays in Strathnaver*; chaidh Iain agus cuid de a luchd-cinnidh a-mach air a chèile gu salach: *John and some of his clansfolk fell out completely*; gach Sàbaid, bhiodh e a' sreap gu mullach na beinne as fhaisge air X: *every Sabbath, he would climb to the summit of the hill closest to X*; chitheadh a nàbaidhean e: *his neighbours would see him*; nach bu chòir dhaibh a bhith a' dèanamh obair sam bith: *they shouldn't do any work*; leanabh-gille a bha na chadal ann an lag fraoich: *a baby boy who was sleeping in a heathery hollow*; chuimhnich e na briathran ann an Leabhar Mhata, Caibideil 18, rannan 3 gu 5: *he remembered the words in Matthew Chapter 18 verses 3 to 5*; mura bi sibh mar leanaban, nach tèid sibh a-steach a rìoghachd nèimh: *unless you become like little children, that you will never enter the kingdom of heaven*; chuir e roimhe gabhail ris a' ghille seo mar dhalta: *he decided to accept this boy as a foster-child*; tè a th' air a cuimhneachadh an-diugh mar: *one [female] that is remembered today as*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: Iain Bàn Mòr: *Big Fair-haired John*. In circumstances where two unrelated adjectives are describing an animal or person, the dimensional adjective would usually precede a colour adjective – e.g. cat mòr dubh 'a big black cat'; cù beag crosta 'an irascible small dog'. However, the teller of this tale was certain – the man's name was Iain Bàn Mòr. Perhaps there was another Iain Bàn, who was known as Iain Bàn Beag.

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: mur iompaichear sibh: *if you will not be converted*.

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