

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Travels in Another Country

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 1,378. There is also a simpler version – An Litir Bheag – which is broadcast at 2:30pm each Sunday. Litir Bheag 1,074 corresponds to Litir 1,378. The Litir is also available at www.bbc.co.uk/litir and www.learnghaelic.scot/litir. Ruairidh can be contacted at fios@learnghaelic.scot.

Chan ann tric a chluinneas no a leughas sinn bàrdachd Ghàidhlig a tha a-mach air rùrachd – no *foraging*. Tha mi a' ciallachadh le sin cruinneachadh, mar eisimpleir, dhearcan no measan eile, seach a bhith a' sealg nam fiadh no ag iasgach nam breac. Tuigidh sibh gun robh mi gu math toilichte nuair a leugh mi dàn à Siorrachd Pheairt anns a bheil a' bhana-bhàrd a' dèanamh iomradh air rùrachd.

'S i Mairearad Ghriogarach a sgrìobh an dàn. Tha e am measg trithean 's a ceithir òrain a sgrìobh i. Bha Mairearad beò eadar meadhan an ochdamh linn deug agus tràth san naoidheamh linn deug.

Thogadh i ann an **Garbh-chrìochan Pheairt** – am measg nan Gàidheal. Bha a h-athair à Bràigh Raineach. Nuair a chaidh i gu foghlam agus dreuchd ann am Baile Pheairt, bha an cianalas oirre – agus sgrìobh i mu dheidhinn. Seo an dàrna agus treas rann de dh'aon dàn a sgrìobh i. Èistibh airson nam faclan – *dearcas* 'berries' agus *meas* 'fruit':

*Thug mi tamall an toiseach gun sprochd orm no sgìths,
Rè an latha ri fuaigheal, gun smuaineach' air nì,
Gus an cual' mi na dearcas bhith gan reic airson fiach,
Ghrad-bhuail e am bheachd-sa, Coire Bhacaidh nam fiadh.*

*'S truagh gun bhith an Leitir Dhubh Lachlainn, 's ann a chaisginn mo mhiann,
Gheibhte iomadach meas ann, gun neach a' farraid am prìs;
Coire gaolach mo chridh' am biodh iasg is sitheann gun dìth,
Meug is bainne gun airceas, 's cha b' iad na drapagan tì.*

Tha Mairearad a' cuimhneachadh mar a bhiodh i a' faighinn nan dearcas an-asgaidh nuair a bha i a' fuireach sna Garbh-chrìochan. Tha i air a tàmailteachadh gun robh aice ri pàigheadh air an son ann am Baile Pheairt.

Thàinig an dàn seo gu m' aire nuair a bha mi a' leughadh an leabhair a dh'ainmich anns an Litir mu dheireadh – *Travels in Another Country: A Guide to Gaelic Scotland* le Coinneach MacGill-Eain. Tha an leabhar làn fiosrachaidh mu dhualchas nan Gàidheal anns gach sgìre far an robh a' Ghàidhlig ga bruidhinn. Bidh am fiosrachadh feumail do dhaoine a tha a' toirt seachad seirbheis do luchd-turais anns an latha an-diugh – agus **san latha a-màireach**.

Na chunntas mu Shiorrachd Pheairt, tha Coinneach ag innse dhuinn mu mhaireachd na Gàidhlig anns an fhicheadamh linn, mu eachdraidh nam madaidhean-allaidh, mu Dhiùcan Athall, agus cuid dhiubh taiceil don Ghàidhlig, Gàidheil san arm, Beul-aithris na sgìre, Clach Sgàin agus grunn rudan eile. Tha bàrdachd Mairearad Ghriogarach am measg sin.

Tha an t-ùghdar ag innse dhuinn mar a chuala e neach-iùil ag innse do luchd-turais nach robh càil ri fhaicinn air an rathad eadar Inbhir Nis agus Peairt, agus nach robh ainm-àite Gàidhlig ann deas air Athall. Tha Coinneach còir a' cur sin ceart!

Mo bheannachd aige airson an leabhar seo a sgrìobhadh. Cho luath 's a chluinneas sinn daoine ag ràdh, 'Cha robh Gàidhlig riamh air a bruidhinn an seo', faodaidh sinn an stiùireadh chun an leabhair seo. Eadar Baile Dhùn Èideann agus Eilean Leòdhais mu thuath, eadar Gall-Ghàidhealaibh agus Siorrachd Obar Dheathain, tha dualchas Gàidhealach ann as fhiach a thaisbeanadh do luchd-turais agus dhuinn fhèin.

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Faclan na Litreach: Siorrachd Pheairt: *Perthshire*; Mairearad Ghriogarach: *Margaret MacGregor*; Coinneach MacGill-Eain: *Coinneach Maclean*; mairsinneachd: *survival*; Clach Sgàin: *The Stone of Scone [Destiny]*.

Abairtean na Litreach: Chan ann tric a chluinneas no a leughas sinn bàrdachd Ghàidhlig a tha a-mach air rùrachd: *it's not often we hear or read Gaelic poetry that is on about foraging*; cruinneachadh dhearcan no measan eile: *gathering berries or other fruit*; a' dèanamh iomradh air: *making mention of*; bha a h-athair à Bràigh Raineach: *her father was from the Braes of Rannoch*; bha an cianalas oirre: *she was homesick*; thug mi tamall an toiseach gun sprochd orm no sgèths: *I spent a while to begin with, without suffering dejection or weariness*; rè an latha ri fuaigheal, gun smuaineach' air nì: *sewing all day and thinking of nothing*; gus an cual' mi na dearcas bhith gan reic airson fiach: *till I heard berries were being sold for a price*; ghrad-bhuail e am bheachd-sa, Coire Bhacaidh nam fiadh: *I suddenly recalled Coire Bhacaidh of the deer*; 's truagh gun bhith an X, 's ann a chaisginn mo mhiann: *it's a shame not to be in X, that's where I would quench my desire*; gheibhte iomadach meas ann, gun neach a' farraid am pris: *many fruits would be got there, without anybody asking their price*; am biodh iasg is sìtheann gun dìth: *where fish and venison are plentiful*; meug is bainne gun airceas, 's cha b' iad na drapagan tì: *whey and milk without scarcity, and not drops of tea*; air a tàmailteachadh: *horrified*; deas air Athall: *south of Atholl*; as fhiach a thaisbeanadh: *worth displaying*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: Thogadh i ann an **Garbh-chrìochan Pheairt** – am measg nan Gàidheal: *she was brought up in Highland Perthshire – among the Gaels. This name for the Gàidhealtachd of Perthshire is the one used by Coinneach Maclean in his book. Garbh-chrìochan 'rough territories' is an old name for the Highlands (before they became associated with the Gàidhealtachd i.e. when Gaelic was still spoken in parts of the Lowlands). It is most frequently heard today as a name for the rugged area of the Western Highlands which includes Moidart and Knoydart.*

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: a tha a' toirt seachad seirbheis do luchd-turais anns an latha an-diugh – agus **san latha a-màireach**: *who provide a service to tourists today – and tomorrow.*

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