

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Murchadh nan Gobhar (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 1,385. There is also a simpler version – An Litir Bheag – which is broadcast at 2:30pm each Sunday. Litir Bheag 1,081 corresponds to Litir 1,385. 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, no bha, cuid de dhaoine **air an ainmeachadh air gobhair**. Ach 's e an rud a tha car iongantach mu dheidhinn, gur e dà ainm-baistidh fireann a tha a' nochdadh ann an co-cheangal riutha. 'S iad sin 'Dòmhnall' agus 'Murchadh'.

Cha chuala mi riamh guth air Alasdair nan Gobhar no Donnchadh nan Gobhar no Iain nan Gobhar. No Màiri nan Gobhar no Ealasaid nan Gobhar. Agus, leis an fhìrinn innse, 's ann ann an òrain a-mhàin a chuala mi an t-ainm Dòmhnall nan Gobhar. Sin na h-òrain Dòmhnall Bàn nan Gobhar agus Dòmhnall Dubh nan Gobhar.

Tha 'Murchadh' eadar-dhealaichte, ge-tà. Bha barrachd air aon duine air an robh 'Murchadh nan Gobhar', agus 's e fìor dhaoine a bh' ann am feadhainn dhiubh. Tha iad a' nochdadh ann an cunntasan eachdraidheil a bharrachd air beul-aithris.

Mar eisimpleir, anns an leabhar aige *Story and Song from Loch Ness-side*, tha Alasdair Dòmhnallach ag innse dhuinn mu Mhurchadh nan Gobhar – fear a bha air leth fiosrachail mu ghalairean bheathaichean. Bhiodh e an-còmhnaidh leis an fhèile-bheag air. Gu mì-fhortanach, chan eil an t-ùghdar ag innse dhuinn cuin a bha Murchadh beò no cà' robh e a' fuireach.

Chaidh sgeul mu fhear eile air an robh 'Murchadh nan Gobhar' a chruinneachadh le Calum Iain MacGill-Eain bho Iain Dòmhnallach ann am Bràigh Loch Abar. Seo agaibh geàrr-chunntas dheth: Bhiodh mòran Èireannach a' tighinn a-nall a dh'Alba, agus iad a' reic ghobhar. Bhiodh Murchadh a' ceannach feadhainn bhuapa agus gan reic thall 's a-bhos.

Chuala e gun robh fear a bha seo – an Caipitean Dòmhnallach – ag iarraidh feadhainn. 'Gabhaidh mi na gobhair,' thuirt an Caipitean, 'ach dè tha thu ag iarraidh orra?'

'Dà thastan air a' chiad tè,' thuirt Murchadh, 'agus an dùblachadh dhan deireadh.'

'Och, gheibh thu sin,' thuirt an Caipitean. 'Bi an seo leotha a-màireach aig uair feasgar.'

Dh'inns an Caipitean do choimhearsnach gun do cheannaich e na gobhair aig prìs reusanta. 'Dà thastan air a' chiad tè agus an dùblachadh dhan deireadh.'

‘Tha iad daor aig a’ phrìs sin,’ thuirt am fear eile ris. ‘Dùblaich thusa a h-uile tasan agus aon uair ’s gun tig e gu not, cha bhi e fada a’ dol gu dà not. Nuair a thig e gu deich notaichean,’ thuirt e, ‘chan fhada gum bi e aig fichead not, an uair sin dà fhichead, a’ dùblachadh a h-uile triop.’

‘Cha tug mi an aire dha gu seo,’ thuirt an Caiptean. ‘Dè tha mi a’ dol a dhèanamh?’

Cho-dhùin e nach robh ann ach aon dòigh faighinn a-mach às an droch bhargan a rinn e. B’ e sin **na gobhair aig Murchadh a chur iomarla** gus nach biodh comas aig Murchadh tighinn aig uair feasgar.

Agus ’s e sin a chaidh a dhèanamh. Chaidh na gobhair a chur iomarla air Murchadh. Cha d’ fhuair e na gobhair còmhla gu anmoch air an oidhche. Nuair a nochd e aig taigh a’ Chaiptein, thuirt an Caiptean nach gabhadh e riutha.

‘Bha duine a’ dol a cheannach nan gobhar bhuamsa – ’s ann do dhuine eile a bha iad,’ thuirt e. ‘Ach nuair a thàinig e gan iarraidh aig uair feasgar cha robh iad an seo ann. Cha b’ urrainn dhuinn, mar sin, am bargan a choileanadh.’ Fhuair an Caiptean a-mach às an droch bhargan agus b’ fheudar do Mhurchadh nan Gobhar smaoineachadh a-rithist!

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Faclan na Litreach: Murchadh nan Gobhar: *Murdo of the Goats*; Bràigh Loch Abar: *Brae Lochaber*; geàrr-chunntas: *summary*.

Abairtean na Litreach: ’s e an rud a tha car iongantach mu dheidhinn: *the thing that is somewhat surprising about it is*; gur e dà ainm-baistidh fireann a tha a’ nochdadh ann an co-cheangal riutha: *that it is two masculine given names that appear in connection with them*; ’s ann ann an òrain a-mhàin a chuala mi an t-ainm: *it’s only in songs that I [have] heard the name*; ’s e fìor dhaoine a bh’ ann am feadhainn dhiubh: *some of them were real people*; a’ nochdadh ann an cunntasan eachdraidheil a bharrachd air beul-aithris: *appearing in historical accounts in addition to oral tradition*; air leth fiosrachail mu ghalairean bheathaichean: *exceptionally knowledgeable about diseases of animals*; bhiodh Murchadh a’ ceannach feadhainn bhuapa agus gan reic thall ’s a-bhos: *Murdo would be buying some from them and selling them here and there*; dè tha thu ag iarraidh orra?: *what do you want for them?*; dà thasan air a’ chiad tè: *two shillings for the first one*; agus an dùblachadh dhan deireadh: *and doubling them [each goat] till the end*; gheibh thu sin: *you’ll get that*; bi an seo leatha a-màireach aig uair feasgar: *be here with them tomorrow at one o’ clock in the afternoon*; dh’inns an Caiptean do choimhearsnach gun do cheannaich e na gobhair aig prìs reusanta: *the Captain told a neighbour that he bought the goats at a reasonable price*; nuair a thig e gu deich notaichean, chan fhada gum bi e aig fichead not: *when it reaches ten pounds, it won’t be long reaching twenty pounds*; cha tug mi an aire dha gu seo: *I didn’t appreciate that until now*; thuirt X nach gabhadh e riutha: *X said he wouldn’t take them*; cha b’ urrainn dhuinn am bargan a choileanadh: *we couldn’t conclude the bargain*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: Tha, no bha, cuid de dhaoine **air an ainmeachadh air gobhair**: *some people were, or are, named for goats*. Note the preposition ‘air’ here. Chaidh muinntir Chataibh ainmeachadh air a’ chat-fhiadhaich ‘*the people of Cataibh (East Sutherland) were named for the wildcat*’.

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: na gobhair aig Murchadh a chur iomarla:
disperse/scatter Murdo's goats.

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