

## An Litir Bheag le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

An Litir Bheag is a shortened and simplified version of Ruairidh's Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh (also available on the BBC website), designed for those who are at an earlier stage of learning Gaelic. The topic each week is the same as Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh so that, once the Litir Bheag is mastered, a student of the language might wish to try the full Litir. This is Litir Bheag 231 (which corresponds to Litir 535). Ruairidh can be contacted at [rodny.macleam@bbc.co.uk](mailto:rodny.macleam@bbc.co.uk).

*Glen Golly, Glen Golly,  
Glen Golly of the trees  
Who could see it and not praise it,  
Glen Golly of the trees*

*That's the refrain of a famous poem/song. Glen Golly is in the Mackay Country. That's in the north of the Highlands. And who is the poet? Well, none other than Rob Donn – a very famous poet.*

*Rob was born in Allt na Caillich, early in the Eighteenth Century. Allt na Caillich is south of Ben Hope. It's close to Glen Golly. But Rob was buried in Balnakeil Cemetery. That's in Durness, on the shore.*

*Up the road from the cemetery, there is a bookshop. I was on a trip in the area last year. I went to look at the cemetery. I saw Rob Donn's gravestone memorial. Then I went up the road. I saw the book The World of Rob Donn by Ian Grimble on a shelf. I was wanting to buy the book.*

*I put the book on the counter. "I'm pleased to get this book," I said to the woman who was behind the counter. She didn't say anything. "Particularly in this area," I said.*

*Gleanna Gollaidh, Gleanna Gollaidh,  
Gleanna Gollaidh nan craobh,  
Cò a chì e nach mol e,  
Gleanna Gollaidh nan craobh.*

*'S e sin sèist aig dàn ainmeil. Tha Gleanna Gollaidh ann an Dùthaich MhicAoidh. Tha sin ann an ceann a tuath na Gàidhealtachd. Agus cò am bàrd? Uill, cò eile ach Rob Donn – bàrd gu math ainmeil.*

*Rugadh Rob ann an Allt na Caillich, tràth anns an ochdamh linn deug. Tha Allt na Caillich gu deas air Beinn Hòb. Tha e faisg air Gleanna Gollaidh. Ach chaidh Rob a thiodh-lacadh ann an cladh Baile na Cille. Tha sin ann an Diùrinis, air a' chladach.*

*Suas an rathad bhon chladh, tha bùth leabhraichean. Bha mi air chuairt anns an sgìre an-uiridh. Chaidh mi a choimhead air a' chladh. Chunnaic mi an carragh-uaghe aig Rob Donn. An uair sin chaidh mi suas an rathad. Chaidh mi a-steach don bhùth. Chunnaic mi an leabhar *The World of Rob Donn* le Ian Grimble air sgeilp. Bha mi ag iarraidh an leabhar a cheannach.*

*Chuir mi an leabhar air a' chunntair. "Tha mi toilichte an leabhar seo fhaighinn," thuirt mi ris an tè a bha air cùl a' chunntair. Cha tuirt i guth. "Gu*

*“It’s just fitting.”*

*The woman picked up the book. She read the title – The World of Rob Donn. “Rob Don – who was he then?” she said. What could I say?*

*“Only the most famous person ever to come out of here,” I said...*

*Fortunately, the children in Tongue Primary School are more familiar with Rob Donn. Many of the pupils are in the Gaelic Medium unit. And the others learn a bit of Gaelic. Roddy MacLeod helps them with the Gaelic. I mentioned [named] Roddy in the Litir last week. He was at one time a fisherman in Kylesku.*

*I was in the Mackay Country in the spring of this year. Roddy gave me an invitation to go and watch the pupils. They were singing songs. Among those they sang was Gleanna Gollaidh by Rob Donn.*

*Glen Golly, Glen Golly,  
Glen Golly of the trees  
Who could see it and not praise it,  
Glen Golly of the trees*

*h-àraidh anns an sgìre seo,” thuirt mi. “Tha e dìreach iomchaidh.”*

*Thog am boireannach an leabhar. Leugh i an tiotal – The World of Rob Donn. “Rob Don – who was he then?” thuirt i. Dè chanainn?*

*“Dìreach an duine a b’ ainmeile a thàinig às a seo riamh,” fhreagair mi...*

*Gu fortanach, tha a’ chlann ann am Bun-sgoil Thunga nas eòlaiche air Rob Donn. Tha mòran de na sgoilearan anns an aonad Ghàidhlig. Agus bidh càch ag ionnsachadh beagan Gàidhlig. Bidh Ruairidh MacLeòid gan cuideachadh leis a’ Ghàidhlig. Dh’ainmich mi Ruairidh anns an Litir an t-seachdain sa chaidh. Bha e uaireigin na iasgair anns a’ Chaolas Chumhang.*

*Bha mi ann an Dùthaich Mhic-Aoidh as t-earrach am-bliadhna. Thug Ruairidh cuireadh dhomh dhol a choimhead air a’ chloinn-sgoile. Bha iad a’ gabhail òrain. Am measg na ghabh iad, bha Gleanna Gollaidh le Rob Donn. Gleanna Gollaidh, Gleanna Gollaidh, Gleanna Gollaidh nan craobh,  
Cò a chì e nach mol e,  
Gleanna Gollaidh nan craobh.*