

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 740 (which corresponds to Litir 1,044). Ruairidh can be contacted at roddy.maclean@bbc.co.uk.

I was telling you about Donald MacPherson and the Bodach who lived in the woods around Loch Garten. When he saw the white thing in the darkness, Donald made for his house. When he reached the kitchen, he fainted.

He didn't say anything about the matter until next day. People had different opinions about it. Some people thought it was the Bodach that had scared him. People would hear [the Bodach] when somebody was about to die. And, shortly after that night, the man who rented the farm where Donald was playing cards died.

They buried the man in the cemetery at the old church in Kincardine. They took his remains in a cart which was pulled by two white stallions. They got the cart from the innkeeper in Nethy Bridge.

They took the old road near Tulloch. When they reached the place where Donald saw the white thing, the stallions started to fight with each other. They were kicking and biting and rising on their hind legs. The funeral cart turned over. But the horses were still fighting. And one of them let out a scream like the scream that Donald heard the other night previously.

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh mu Dhòmhnall Mac a' Phearsain agus am Bodach a bha beò anns na coilltean timcheall Loch a' Ghartain. Nuair a chunnaic e an rud geal anns an dorchadas, rinn Dòmhnall air an taigh aige. Nuair a ràinig e an cidsin, chaidh e an laigse.

Cha tuirt e dad mun ghnòthach chun an ath latha. Bha diofar bheachdan aig daoine air. Bha cuid dhen bheachd gur e am Bodach a chuir eagal air. Bhiodh daoine ga chluinntinn nuair a bha bàs an impis tighinn air cuideigin. Agus, goirid an dèidh na h-oidhche sin, chaochail am fear aig an robh am baile-fearainn air mhàl far an robh Dòmhnall a' cluich chairtean.

Thiodhlaic iad an duine anns a' chladh aig an t-seann eaglais ann an Ceann Chàrdainn. Thug iad an dust aige ann an cairt a bha air a tarraing le dà àigeach gheal. Fhuair iad a' chairt o fhear an taigh-òsta ann an Drochaid Neithich.

Thug iad an seann rathad faisg air an Tulach. Nuair a ràinig iad an t-àite far am faca Dòmhnall an rud geal, thòisich na h-àigich air sabaid le chèile. Bha iad a' breabadh 's a' bideadh 's ag èirigh air an casan deiridh. Chuir an carbad-tiodhlacaidh car. Ach bha na h-eich fhathast a' sabaid. Agus leig fear dhiubh sgreuch coltach ris an sgreuch a chuala Dòmhnall an oidhche roimhe.

Did Donald have the second sight? Had he seen an apparition? Were the stallions the Bodach? The local people had many opinions on the matter.

In addition to the Bodach, people were making out that a water beast was living in Loch Garten. It was black with a large mane and large head. People would be seeing it beside the burn that goes from Loch Garten to Loch Mallachie about half a mile away. They were saying that this creature would eat young children and lambs.

One crofter was bolder than the others. He decided to capture the beast. But how? You'll hear next week.

An robh an dà-shealladh air Dòmhnall? An robh e air manadh fhaicinn? Am b' iad na h-àigich am Bodach? Bha iomadh beachd aig muinntir an àite air a' chùis.

A bharrachd air a' Bhodach, bha daoine a' cumail a-mach gun robh biast-uisge a' fuireach ann an Loch a' Ghartain. Bha e dubh le muing mhòr agus ceann mòr. Bhiodh daoine ga fhaicinn ri taobh an uillt a tha a' dol bho Loch a' Ghartain gu ruige Loch Mallachaidh mu leth-mhìle air falbh. Bha iad ag ràdh gum biodh an creutair seo ag ithe clann òg agus uain.

Bha aon chroitear na bu dàna na càch. Chuir e roimhe a' bhiast a chur an grèim. Ach ciamar? Cluinnidh sibh an-ath-sheachdain.