

# **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 741 (which corresponds to Litir 1,045). Ruairidh can be contacted at [rodgy.maclean@bbc.co.uk](mailto:rodgy.maclean@bbc.co.uk).*

*I was telling you about the crofter who decided to capture the water-beast in Loch Garten. He found a large stone on the shore of the loch. He put a rope around the stone. At the other end of the rope was a fishing gaff. On the gaff, he put a dead lamb. He rowed a boat out to the middle of the loch. He threw the end of the rope out and went home.*

*All night long there was a storm, with thunder and lightning. Despite the sound of the thunder, people heard the beast's roaring. The old man returned to the loch in the morning. And there was no sign of the stone. There was only a furrow on the shore where the stone was dragged into the loch. Since then, nobody has seen the stone or water-beast.*

*I have another anecdote about Loch Garten. There was a man at one time who walked across the loch when it was frozen. He was advised not to return the same road. It would be after Bride's Fesat Day (Candlemas), and the ice would be melting. But the man did not take the advice. He returned home across the loch. The ice broke and he was drowned.*

*Near Loch Garten, there is another loch. It has an unusual name – Loch Mallachie 'loch of cursing'. The name*

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh mun chroitear a chuir roimhe a' bhiast-uisge ann an Loch a' Ghartain a ghlacadh. Lorg e clach mhòr air cladach an locha. Chuir e ròp timcheall na cloiche. Aig ceann eile an ròpa bha iarann-crom. Air an iarann, chuir e uan marbh. Dh'iomraich e bàta a-mach gu meadhan an locha. Thilg e ceann an ròpa a-mach agus chaidh e dhachaigh.

Fad na h-oidhche bha stoirm ann, le tàirneanaich is dealanaich. A dh'aindeoin fuaim an tàirneanaich, chuala daoine beucaich na bèiste. Thill am bodach don loch anns a' mhadainn. Agus cha robh sgeul air a' chloich. Cha robh ann ach clais air a' chladach far an robh a' chlach air a tarraing a-steach don loch. Bhon uair sin, chan fhaca duine a' chlach no a' bhiast-uisge.

Tha naidheachd eile agam mu Loch a' Ghartain. Bha duine ann uaireigin a choisich tarsainn an locha nuair a bha e reòite. Chaidh comhairle a thoirt dha gun a bhith a' tilleadh air an dearbh rathad. Bhiodh e an dèidh Latha Fèill Bride, agus bhiodh an deigh a' leaghadh. Ach cha do ghabh an duine a' chomhairle. Thill e dhachaigh tarsainn an locha. Bhris an deigh agus chaidh a bhàthadh.

Faisg air Loch a' Ghartain, tha loch eile ann. Tha ainm annasach air – Loch Mallachaidh 'loch of cursing'. Tha an t-ainm

*comes from mallachadh – or mallachd [curse] – which is connected to the burn that flows from the loch to the River Spey. Today it's called Loch Mallachie Burn. But it was at one time called the Allt Garbhach. There was a mill on it. There is still a farm there called Mullingaroch Farm. I imagine that is Muileann Garbhach.*

*Anyway, a bridegroom that was crossing the burn near the mill suddenly died. His wife made a curse. She said that anybody that was going to a wedding across the burn there would suffer bad luck. For a very long time, a newly married couple would not cross the burn near the mill. The name 'loch of cursing' was give to the loch because of that.*

a' tighinn bho mhallachadh – no mallachd – a tha co-cheangailte ris an allt a tha a' sruthadh bhon loch gu Uisge Spè. 'S e *Loch Mallachie Burn* a tha air an-diugh. Ach 's e an t-Allt Garbhach a bha air uaireigin. Bha muileann air. Tha baile-fearainn ann fhathast air a bheil *Mullingaroch Farm*. Tha mi an dùil gur e sin Muileann Garbhach.

Co-dhiù, thàinig bàs obann air fear-bainnse a bha a' dèanamh a shlighe thar an uillt faisg air a' mhuileann. Rinn a bhean mallachd. Thuir i gun tigeadh droch fhortan air duine sam bith a bha a' dol gu banais tarsainn an uillt an sin. Airson ùine mhòr, cha bhiodh càraid nua-phòsta a' dol tarsainn an uillt faisg air a' mhuileann. Thàinig an t-ainm Loch Mallachaidh air an loch air sàillibh sin.