

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 782 (which corresponds to Litir 1,086). Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.macleon@bbc.co.uk.

Do you know Glen Ericht in Perthshire? The River Ericht flows through it. That's the river that goes through Blairgowrie.

The River Ericht starts at Bridge of Cally, where the River Ardlie and the Black Water come together. South of Bridge of Cally, the river flows through a ravine. There, there is 'the raven's crag'. On the maps, this is written where the crag is: 'Lady Lindsay's Castle (remains of)'.

Who was Lady Lindsay? Well, here is her story. Around the year 1489, two brothers were in a castle in Strathardle. They were Alexander Lindsay, the eldest son of the clan chief – the Earl of Crawford – and his brother, John.

The brothers fell out with each other. They wielded weapons against each other. Alexander was wounded. He was lying in his bed afterwards. His wife put a pillow on his face to suffocate him.

His wife was Janet Gordon, a daughter of the Earl of Huntly. Her mother was a daughter of King James I. As soon as Alexander Lindsay was out of the way, Janet married another

A bheil sibh eòlach air Gleann Eireachd ann an Siorrachd Pheairt? Tha Uisge Eireachd a' sruthadh troimhe. Sin an abhainn a tha a' dol tro Bhlàr Ghobharaidh.

*Tha Uisge Eireachd a' tòiseachadh aig Drochaid Challaidh, far a bheil Uisge Àrdail agus an t-Uisge Dubh a' tighinn còmhla. Deas air Drochaid Challaidh, tha an abhainn a' sruthadh tro mhòr-chlais. An sin, tha Creag an Fhithich. Air na mapaichean, tha seo sgrìobhte far a bheil a' chreag: *Lady Lindsay's Castle (remains of)*.*

Cò bha ann am Baintighearna Liondsaidh? Uill, seo agaibh a sgeul. Timcheall na bliadhna ceithir cheud deug, ochdad 's a naoi (1489), bha dithis bhràithrean ann an caisteal ann an Srath Àrdail. B' iad Alasdair Liondsaidh, am mac a bu shine aig a' cheann-chinnidh – Iarla Chrawford – agus a bhràthair, Iain.

Chaidh na bràithrean a-mach air a chèile. Thog iad buill-airm an aghaidh a chèile. Bha Alasdair air a leòn. Bha e na laighe san leabaidh an dèidh làimhe. Chuir a bhean cluasag air aodann airson a mhùchadh.

B' i a bhean Seònaid Ghòrdan, nighean aig Iarla Hunndaidh. Bha a màthair na nighinn aig Rìgh Seumas I. Cho luath 's a bha Alasdair Liondsaidh a-mach às an rathad, phòs Seònaid fear eile. Cha robh

man. He wasn't alive long. Shortly after that, she had a third marriage.

She was free from accusations of crime for more than ten years. But in the year 1500, she was convicted of Alexander's murder. Her punishment was to be locked in a tower on the top of the raven's crag, three hundred feet above the river.

Lady Lindsay was in prison for the rest of her life. Every day, she was spinning a thread. When the thread reached [would reach] the river, the lady would receive food.

She continued like that, day after day, week after week, year after year, until she was more than a hundred years old. In the end, she died. But, as we'll see next week, she appeared again as a ghost, and she did something good.

esan beò fada. Goirid an dèidh a bhàis, bha treas pòsadh aice.

Bha i saor bho chasaidean eucoir airson còrr is deich bliadhna. Ach anns a' bhliadhna còig ceud deug (1500), bha i air a dìteadh airson murt Alasdair. B' e a peanas a bhith air a glasadh ann an tùr air mullach Creag an Fhithich, trì cheud troigh os cionn na h-aibhne.

Bha a' Bhaintighearna Liondsaidh sa phrìosan fad a' chòrr de a beatha. Gach latha, bha i a' snìomh snàithlean. Nuair a ruigeadh an snàithlean an abhainn, gheibheadh a' bhaintighearna biadh.

Lean i oirre mar sin, latha an dèidh latha, seachdain an dèidh seachdain, bliadhna an dèidh bliadhna, gus an robh i còrr is ceud bliadhna a dh'aois. Mu dheireadh, chaochail i. Ach, mar a ch'inn an-ath-sheachdain, nochd i a-rithist mar thaibhs, agus rinn i rudeigin math.