

# Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

*A special programme, in the form of a “letter”, designed for Gaelic learners who already have some knowledge of the language. A short vocabulary and comments on points of grammar and figures of speech are included with the text. If you have comments, Ruairidh can be contacted at [rodny.macleon@bbc.co.uk](mailto:rodny.macleon@bbc.co.uk). This is Litir 480. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 176 corresponds to Litir 480.*

Bha mi ann am meadhan na Cuimrigh, air an tràna a’ dol gu ruige Aberystwyth. Bha an dùthaich mu mo thimcheall gu math brèagha. Bha achaidhean gorm’ ann is doireachan beaga, le corra taigh an siud ’s an seo. An uair sin, chunnaic mi e. Clamhan mòr anns an adhar.

Nise, tha diofar sheòrsaichean de chlamhain ann. Mar eisimpleir, an clamhan, no *buzzard* ann am Beurla, an clamhan fionn, no *hen harrier*, agus an clamhan riabhach, no *honey buzzard*. Ach bha earball gobhlach air an eun a chunnaic mi bhon tràna. Bha mi a’ coimhead air clamhan gobhlach – no *red kite*.

Carson a thug sin toileachas dhomh, oir tha iad cumanta gu leòr faisg air far a bheil mi a’ fuireach air a’ Ghàidhealtachd? Chithear gu tric iad ann an Ros an Ear. Ge-tà, cha b’ ann mar sin a bha cùisean o chionn fichead bliadhna. An uair sin, b’ e a’ Chuimrigh an t-aon àite ann am Breatainn far an robh an clamhan gobhlach ri fhaicinn. Bha an t-eun a chunnaic mi bhon tràna anns an aon àite anns na h-eileanan seo far an do dh’fhuirich a leithid beò.

Bha e uaireigin pailt ann am bailtean mòra Bhreatainn. Rinn Uilleam Shakespeare iomradh air cho pailt ’s a bha iad ann an Lunnainn ri a linn. Bhiodh iad a’ tighinn beò air an sgudal air na sràidean. Agus bha iad pailt a-muigh air an dùthaich cuideachd. Bhiodh daoine gam faicinn gu tric air sgèith, gun ghluasad, os cionn achadh. ’S e sin as coireach gun tugadh an t-ainm *kite* air iteileag ann am Beurla.

Ghlan sinn ar bailtean mòra. Agus, anns an naoidheamh linn deug, mharbh geamairean tòrr chlamhan gobhlach, a’ smaoineachadh gun robh iad a’ sgrios nan cearcan-fraoich ’s a leithid. Thuit an àireamh dhiubh gu mòr.

Tha abairt againn ann an Gàidhlig – **chuir sin an clamhan gobhlach am measg nan cearc**. Tha sin coltach ri “that put the cat among the pigeons” ann am Beurla. Ge-tà, tha luchd-glèidhteachais ag ràdh nach dèan iad cron mòr sam bith air cearcan no air cearcan-fraoich.

Mu dheireadh ’s e meadhan na Cuimrigh, far nach robhar a’ sealg chearcan-fraoich, an aon sgìre far an robh an clamhan gobhlach. Ach cha do thuig mi, gus an robh mi ann an Tregaron, cho gann ’s a bha iad sa Chuimrigh cuideachd. Ann an Tregaron, baile beag faisg air Aberystwyth, tha taigh-tasgaidh ann don *barcud coch* mar a chanas iad nan cànan fhèin – an “clamhan ruadh”. Aig toiseach an fhicheadamh linn, bha an àireamh dhiubh air a dhol sìos gu trì paidhrichean.

Ghabh luchd-glèidhteachais gnothach riutha. Thug iad uighean a-steach bhon Spàinn agus chuir iad iad ann an neadan chlamhan àbhaisteach. Rugadh gu leòr de dh’iseanan ach,

gu mì-fhortanach, bidh an clamhan gobhlach Spàinneach a' dol air seachran gu nàdarrach – agus dh'fhalbh a' chuid a bu mhotha de na h-eòin nuair a bha iad mòr gu leòr!

Ach lean an luchd-glèidhteachais orra len oidhirpean gus an t-eun a dhìon. **Anns na seasgadan**, dh'èirich an àireamh dhiubh gu fichead paidhir agus tha piseach air tighinn orra bhon uair sin. Tha, is ann an Alba cuideachd, far an deach eòin a thoirt a-steach bhon Ghearmailt agus bhon t-Suain.

'S e eachdraidh a' chlamhain ghobhlaich eachdraidh thruagh, air a leantainn le stòiridh brosnachail. Dìreach mar a tha eachdraidh cànan na Cuimrigh. Thug e toileachas dhomh gun robh i air a bruidhinn gu nàdarrach leis a h-uile duine a bha ag obair ann an taigh-tasgaidh a' chlamhain ghobhlaich ann an Tregaron.

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**Faclan na Litreach:** clamhan: *buzzard (also generic for hawk)*; clamhan gobhlach: *red kite (bird)*; iteileag: *kite (toy)*; luchd-glèidhteachais: *conservationists*; taigh-tasgaidh: *museum*.

**Abairtean na Litreach:** meadhan na Cuimrigh: *mid-Wales*; a' dol gu ruige X: *going to X*; bha achaidhean gorm' ann is doireachan beaga: *there were green fields and small copses*; corra taigh an siud 's an seo: *the odd house here and there*; earball gobhlach: *forked tail*; Ros an Ear: *Easter Ross*; cha b' ann mar sin a bha cùisean: *that is not how things were*; far an do dh'fhuirich a leithid beò: *where the like remained alive*; rinn X iomradh air cho pailt 's a bha iad: *X made mention of how plentiful they were*; a' tighinn beò air an sgudal: *living off the rubbish*; air sgèith: *on the wing*; a' sgrìos nan cearcan-fraoich: *killing the grouse*; far nach robhar a' sealg chearcan-fraoich: *where grouse weren't being hunted*; trì paidhrichean: *three pairs*; mar a chanas iad nan cànan fhèin: *as they say in their own language*; ghabh X gnothach riutha: *X got involved with them*; thug iad uighean a-steach bhon Spàinn: *they imported eggs from Spain*; neadan chlamhain àbhaisteach: *nests of buzzards*; rugadh gu leòr de dh'iseanan: *many chicks were born*; a' dol air seachran gu nàdarrach: *naturally wanders/disperses*; dh'fhalbh a' chuid a bu mhotha de na h-eòin: *most of the birds left*; lean X orra len oidhirpean: *X continued with their efforts*; dh'èirich an àireamh dhiubh gu fichead paidhir: *their number[s] rose to twenty pairs*; tha piseach air tighinn orra: *they have become successful*; bhon Ghearmailt agus bhon t-Suain: *from Germany and [from] Sweden*; air a leantainn le stòiridh brosnachail: *followed by an encouraging story*; eachdraidh cànan na Cuimrigh: *the history of the language of Wales*; thug e toileachas dhomh: *it gave me great pleasure*.

**Puing-chànain na Litreach: anns na seasgadan:** *in the sixties. You will often see it written as anns na 1960an – in which case we would say “anns na seasgadan”. You will also hear the more traditional “anns na trì ficheadan”, based on the vigesimal, rather than decimal, system but the decimal one is gradually taking over. It has the distinct advantage of giving us a simple option when it comes to the “odd” decades – na tritheadan, caogadan, seachdadan and naochadan, which the vigesimal system does not provide.*

**Gnathas-cainnt na Litreach: chuir sin an clamhan gobhlach am measg nan cearc:** *lit. that put the red kite among the hens – an equivalent to the English “that put the cat among the pigeons”.*

\* Tha “Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh” air a maoinachadh le MG ALBA