

Litir do Luchd-Ionnsachaidh **le Ruairidh MacIlleathain**

*A special programme, in the form of a “letter”, written and compiled by Roddy Maclean, and specifically aimed at 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, Roddy can be contacted by e-mail at rodny.maclean@bbc.co.uk **

Dè an ceangal a th’ann eadar Blàr Chùil Lodair agus an niùclas a th’anns gach cealla (cha mhòr) anns gach rud fon ghrèin a tha beò? Chan eil e follaiseach ’s a mhionaid gu bheil ceangal sam bith ann, a bheil? Ach tha, agus seo e: Raibeart MacIlleDhuinn. “Cò?” tha sibh a’ faighneachd. Raibeart MacIlleDhuinn – neo *Robert Brown* ann am Beurla – Albannach a bu chòir a bhith fada nas ainmeile na tha e ann an dùthaich a bhreith.

Rugadh e ann am Montròs air Machair Aonghais anns a’ bhliadhna seachd ceud deug, trì fichead ’s a trì-deug (1773). Bha athair na mhinistear anns an Eaglais Easbaigich agus ’s e Seumasach a bh’ann. ’S e Seumas a bh’air mar ainm cuideachd.

Nuair a chaochail Teàrlach Òg Stiùbhart, cheadaich an Eaglais ùrnaighean airson Rìgh Hanoibhèirianach na h-Alba airson a’ chiad turais. Ach dhiùlt dithis phearsaichean na h-Eaglais gabhail ri sin agus b’e Seumas MacIlleDhuinn, athair Raibeirt, fear dhiubh.

Co-dhiù, cha do ghabh Raibeart mòran ghnòthaich ri poileataigs. Bha ùidh mhòr aige ann an nàdar. Ghluais a theaghlach a Dhun Eideann agus chaidh e don oilthigh anns a’ bhaile sin a dh’ionnsachadh dhotaireachd. Ach, ged is e oileanach mediceach a bh’ann, ’s ann tric a rachadh e a dh’òraidean le Proifèasair Eòlais-nàdair an Oilthigh, an t-Ollamh Urramach Iain Walker. An ceann greis, bha Raibeart a-muigh a’ cruinneachadh lus an dha. Agus aig aois ochd bliadhna deug sgrìobh e a chiad phàipear saidheansail, air lus an Siorrachd Aonghais, do Chomann Eòlais-nàdair Dhun Eideann.

Chuir e seachad còig bliadhna leis an arm ann an Eirinn, agus an uairsin fhuair e cuireadh a bha a’ dol a dh’atharrachadh a bheatha gu tur. Thàinig e gu aire ceann-suidhe a’ Chomainn Rìoghail ann an Lunnainn, Sir Ioseph Banks, a bh’air a bhith cuide ris a’ Chaipitean Seumas Cook ann an Astràilia bliadhnaichean roimhe sin. Bha Banks a’ coimhead airson lus-eòlaiche a rachadh a dh’Astràilia air an t-soitheach an *Investigator* a bha a’ dol a dheanamh rannsachadh mòr air cladach na dùthcha. Thug Banks cuireadh do Raibeart agus cha b’e ruith ach leum dha gabhail ris.

Bha an *Investigator* air falbh airson ceithir bliadhna agus chuir Raibeart seachad mòran ùine a' cruinneachadh lusan is beathaichean, is a' rannsachadh nàdar ann an Astràilia. Tha e air a chuimhneachadh fhathast ann an abhainn – *Brown's River* – ann an Tasmania, agus 's e e fhèin a chuir ainmean Laideann air mòran lusan Astràilianach, ainmean a th'orra fhathast. Nuair a thill e a Bhreatainn chuir e leabhar mòr ri chèile mu dheidhinn lusan Astràilia.

Chuir e seachad a' chuid mhòr dhen chòrr de a bheatha ann an Lunnainn. Tro thìde, choisinn e cliù dha fhèin mar an lus-eòlaiche a b'fheàrr, ri a linn, air an t-saoghal, gu h-àraidh leis a' mhicroscop. B'esan a' chiad duine a dh'aithnich gu bheil an niùclas anns a h-uile cealla ann an lusan. B'esan a' chiad duine a rinn tuairisgeul dhen ghluasad am broinn chealla ris an canar “sruthadh saighteoplasmach” neo *cytoplasmic streaming*. Agus tha e air a chuimhneachadh an-diugh anns an dòigh 's a bheil rudan beaga bìodach a' gluasad ann an uisge, neo lionn sam bith, ged a tha an lionn fhèin aig fois. 'S e sin “Gluasad MhicIlleDhuinn” neo *Brownian Motion*. Duine ainmeil dha-rìridh, ri a linn, agus tha e duilich nach eil barrachd Albannach eòlach air ainm an-diugh.

Ach cha mhòr nach do dhìochuimhnich mi innse dhuibh gu dè an ceangal a bh'aige ri Blàr Chùil Lodair. Uill, bha a sheanair, Iain MacIlleDhuinn, na Sheumasach agus lean e am Prionnsa don deireadh nuair a chaill e a bheatha, cuide ri mòran eile, air an latha dhòrainneach sin a thug Cogadh nan Seumasach gu crìch.

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Faclan na seachdainne: ceangal: *connection*; Blàr Chùil Lodair: *the Battle of Culloden*; niùclas: *nucleus*; cealla: *cell*; cha mhòr: *almost*; Montròs: *Montrose*; Machair Aonghais: *the plain of Angus (as opposed to the glens of Angus)*; Teàrlach Òg Stiùbhart: *Bonnie Prince Charlie (lit. young Charles Stuart)*; dotaireachd: *medicine*; a' cruinneachadh: *collecting*; Siorrachd Aonghais: *the county of Angus*; Eòlas-nàdair: *Natural History*; cuireadh: *invitation*; cuide ris: *along with*; lus-eòlaiche: *botanist*; soitheach: *vessel, ship*; miocrosop: *microscope*; gluasad: *movement*; beag bìodach: *tiny*; lionn: *liquid*.

Abairtean na seachdainne: gach rud fon ghrèin a tha beò: *everything under the sun which is alive*; chan eil e follaiseach 's a mhionaid: *it's not immediately obvious*; dùthaich a bhreith: *the land of his birth*; cheadaich an Eaglais ùrnaighean airson Rìgh Hanoibhèirianach na h-Alba: *the Church gave permission for prayers (to be said) for the Hanoverian King of Scotland*; dhiùlt dithis phearsaichean na h-Eaglais gabhail ri sin: *two Church figures refused to accept that*; cha do ghabh X mòran ghnòthaich ri poileataigs: *X had little to do with politics*; bha ùidh mhòr aige ann an nàdar: *he was greatly interested in nature*; 's ann tric a rachadh e: *he would often go*; chuir e seachad còig bliadhna: *he spent five years*; a bha a' dol a dh'atharrachadh a bheatha gu tur: *that was going to change his life completely*; thàinig e gu aire ceann-suidhe a' Chomainn Rìoghail: *he came to the attention of the president of the Royal Society*; a' chuid

mhòr dhen chòrr de a bheatha: *the greater part of the rest of his life*; ri a linn: *in his time, in his day*; b'esan a' chiad duine a rinn tuairisgeul de: *he was the first person to describe*; aig fois: *at rest, motionless*; cha mhòr nach do dhìochuimhnich mi: *I almost forgot*; air an latha dhòrainneach sin a thug Cogadh nan Seumasach gu crìch: *on that painful day which brought the Jacobite War to an end*.

Puing ghràmair na seachdainne: Bha athair na mhinistear anns an Eaglais Easbaigich agus 's e Seumasach a bh'ann. *His father was a minister in the Episcopalian Church and he was a Jacobite. This sentence shows the two ways of describing a person's character, identity or profession – by using the Assertive Verb ('s e Seumasach a bh'ann) and using the Verb to Be combined with ann an (bha athair na mhinistear), a form often neglected by learners. Ann an is combined in the second example with a possessive pronoun and is thus disguised eg ann an + mo = nam. Tha mi nam thidsear (lit. I am in my teacher; I am a teacher). A bheil thu nad thidsear? (are you a teacher?). Tha e na thidsear (he is a teacher); tha i na tidsear (she is a teacher); tha sinn nar tidsearan (we are teachers); 'eil sibh nur tidsearan? (are you teachers?); tha iad nan tidsearan (they are teachers). Work out how to describe yourself in this manner and use it in your next Gaelic conversation with a stranger (don't be shy now!)*

Gnàths-cainnt na seachdainne: Cha b'e ruith ach leum dha gabhail ris. *He didn't delay an instant in accepting (lit. it wasn't running but jumping). This is a common expression and sometimes it just exists as the simple statement – cha b'e ruith ach leum – eg Thabhann e dhomh ticead-phleana a New York saor 's an asgaidh (he offered me a free plane ticket to NY). An do ghabh thu i? (did you accept?) Cha b'e ruith ach leum! (too right I did and I didn't think twice!)*

* *“Litir do Luchd-Ionnsachaidh” is funded by Comataidh Craolaidh Gàidhlig*