

# 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.maclea@bbc.co.uk](mailto:rodny.maclea@bbc.co.uk) \* This is Litir 239.*

Chòrd e gu mòr ri Iain Stiùbhart Blackie a bhith na oileanach ann an Göttingen anns a’ Ghearmailt. Ach thug athair air gluasad a Bherlin. Cha do chòrd e ris idir anns a’ chathair sin anns a’ chiad dol a-mach, oir bha Berlin fada na bu mhò na Göttingen, agus bha na h-oileanaich sgapte air fheadh. Mean air mhean, ge-tà, fhuair e caraidean ùra.

Bha athair an dòchas gum biodh Iain airson a dhol a-steach don mhinistrealachd ann an Alba agus, gun teagamh, bha ùidh mhòr aige ann an gnothaichean na h-Eaglaise. Agus, fhad ’s a bha e anns a’ Ghearmailt, bhiodh e tric a’ deasbad a’ chreideimh aige le oileanaich eile. Bha e na Chrìosdaidh gun teagamh, ach thòisich e air fàs mì-chinnteach mu Aidmheil Westminster. Cha robh e ag aontachadh ris, agus bha sin a’ ciallachadh nach fhaigheadh e obair mar mhinistear ann an Eaglais na h-Alba. Dh’iarr e air athair leigeil leis dreuchd air choreigin eile a thaghadh.

Thairis air geamhradh ann am Berlin, ràinig Iain làn-fhileantachd ann an Gearmailtis, agus leugh e mòran de na leabhraichean clasaigeach anns a’ chànan sin. Agus ghabh e spèis mhòr mhòr do mhuinntir na dùthcha. Ach bha an ùine aige anns a’ Ghearmailt seachad.

Bha e am beachd dhol a Pharis ach, an toiseach, ghabh e cuairt tron Eadailt agus chòrd e ris gu mòr. Bha e dhen bheachd gum biodh e math dha fuireach anns an Ròimh airson greis airson tuilleadh ionnsachadh mu litreachas nan Ròmanach is nan Greugach. ’S ann nuair a bha e san Eadailt a cho-dhùin e dè dìreach a bha e ag iarraidh a bhith aige mar dhreuchd. Bha e airson a bhith na Phroifeasair de Dhaonnachd ann an oilthigh ann an Alba.

Chuir e rud eile roimhe cuideachd nuair a bha e anns an Ròimh – bha e airson connspaid adhbharachadh mu dheidhinn mar a bhiodh luchd-teagaisg nan oilthighean a’ labhairt na seann Ghreugais – gu ceàrr, na bheachd. Bha esan a’ cumail a-mach – agus lean e aig ceann na connspaid seo fad a bheatha – gum bu chòir dòigh-labhairt an t-seann chànan a bhith stèidhichte air Greugais mar a bha i fhathast ga bruidhinn anns a’ Ghrèig.

Bha athair deònach airgead a thoirt dha airson a bhith a’ siubhal anns a’ Ghrèig, ach dhiùlt Iain an cothrom. Cha robh e airson a bhith an eisimeil carthannas athar gu sìorraidh, agus bha obair aige ri dhèanamh anns an Ròimh. Nuair a thàinig an rannsachadh aige anns an Ròimh gu crìch, rinn e air Lunnainn. Ach cha do ghabh e an t-slighe àbhaisteach.

Choisich e fhèin is caraid Gearmailteach gu ruige Floireans – da cheud gu leth mìle thairis air naoi là. An uair sin choisich iad tro Bhologna gu ruige Bheineas, far an d’ fhuair iad coidse a Mhunch. Ràinig e Lunnainn aig toiseach na Samhna, fhathast le aodach air a bha freagarrach airson an t-samhraidh anns an Eadailt.

Airson beagan bhliadhnaichean bha e ann an Dùn Eideann ag obair ann an lagh. Ach lean e air le bhith a’ leughadh is ag eadar-theangachadh leabhraichean le sgrìobhadairean

Greugach agus Gearmailteach. Gu mì-fhortanach dha, cha robh cathair Daonnachd bàn ann an oilthigh sam bith ann an Alba, agus cha robh dreuchd sam bith eile, a bhiodh freagarrach dha, bàn a bharrachd.

Ach dh'atharraich cùisean dha ann an ochd ceud deug, trithead 's a naoi (1839), nuair a chaidh aontachadh Cathair Laidinn a stèidheachadh ann an Colaiste Mharischal ann an Obar Dheathain. Bha doras saoghal na sgoilearachd fosgailte dha mu dheireadh thall, agus cha b' e ruith ach leum a rinn e troimhe.

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**Faclan na seachdaine:** a' mhinistrealachd: *the ministry (church)*; Crìosdaidh: *Christian*; mì-chinnteach: *uncertain*; Aidmheil Wesminster: *Westminster Confession (of Faith)*; spèis: *respect, affection*; an Ròimh: *Rome*; a' labhairt: *speaking*; Greugais: *Greek (language)*; Floireans: *Florence*; Bheineas: *Venice*; bàn: *unoccupied*.

**Abairtean na seachdaine:** thug athair air gluasad: *his father made him move*; anns a' chathair mhòir sin: *in that great city (note that cathair appears later on, meaning "chair" ie professorship in a university)*; mean air mhean: *little by little*; bha ùidh mhòr aige ann an X: *he was greatly interested in X*; dh'iarr e air athair leigeil leis dreuchd eile a thaghadh: *he asked his father to let him choose another profession*; bha e am beachd dhol a Pharis: *he intended to go to Paris*; bha e dhen bheachd gum biodh e math dha: *he was of the opinion that it would be good for him*; litreachas nan Ròmanach is nan Greugach: *the literature of the Romans and Greeks*; 's ann nuair a bha e san Eadailt: *it was when he was in Italy*; bha e airson a bhith na Phroifeasair de Dhaonnachd: *he wanted to be a Professor of Humanity*; chuir e rud eile roimhe: *he decided another thing*; bha e airson connspaid adhbharachadh: *he wanted to create a controversy*; mar a bha i fhathast ga bruidhinn: *as it (she) was still spoken*; dhiùlt Iain an cothrom: *John refused the opportunity*; rinn e air Lunnainn: *he made for London*; aig toiseach na Samhna: *at the beginning of November*; cha b' e ruith ach leum a rinn e troimhe: *he jumped at the opportunity (idiomatic)*.

**Puing-ghràmar na seachdaine:** Bha na h-oileanaich sgapte air fheadh: *the students were dispersed throughout it. I hope you recognised air fheadh as being a form of the compound preposition air feadh. You might say bha iad sgapte air feadh a' bhaile (they were dispersed throughout the town – and note the genitive). But where no object noun exists, "throughout it" is given as air fheadh for a masculine object (eg baile) and air a feadh for a feminine object. So, if we are talking about a kingdom, we would say bha iad air feadh na rìoghachd, with the (feminine) noun present, and bha iad air a feadh (they were throughout it), without the noun. You will see that the possessive articles are contained within these phrases although the masculine one before a soundless consonant combination is not written. What we are really saying here is "throughout his/her extent".*

**Gnàths-cainnt na seachdaine:** Cha robh e airson a bhith an eisimeil carthannas athar gu sìorraidh: *he did not want to be dependent on his father's charity for ever*. Tha X an eisimeil Y (in the genitive): *X is dependent on Y*.

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