

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.macleam@bbc.co.uk * This is Litir 268.*

An toigh leibh iomain? Tha mi an dòchas gun toigh l’, oir tha ceangal làidir làidir ann eadar spòrs nan Gaidheal agus an cànan. Eadhon an là an-diugh ’s i a’ Ghàidhealtachd fhathast an sgìre as mò far a bheilear a’ cluich iomain. Ach tha e iongantach mar a bha i air a cluich ann am mòran àiteachan eile ann am Breatainn, agus thall thairis, far an robh Gàidheil a’ tighinn cruinn.

Ann an Astràilia is Canada, ann an New York is Cape Town, a bharrachd air Birmingham, Manchester, Lunnainn is mòran àiteachan eile, bhiodh muinntir na camanachd a’ dol air a’ phàirc len camain. An là eile, thàinig mi tarsainn air aithris mu gheam a chaidh a chluich ann an Ameireagaidh a Deas, air pàirc mhòr aig bonn na beinne ann am Montevideo, prìomh bhaile Uruguay. Bha seo ann am meadhan an naoidheamh linn deug.

Thachair e air a’ cheathramh là dhen Ghiblean oir b’ e sin là fèille sa bhaile. Chuir na Gàidheil a bha a’ fuireach ann romhpa geama iomain a chumail. Bha droch choltas air an t-side ach tha fhios nach do chuir sin stad air muinntir na camanachd a-riamh. Chaidh na cluicheadairean a-null ann am bàtaichean bhon bhaile gu ruige bàgh air an taobh thall. Bha sin faisg air a’ phàirc. Eadar am port agus a’ phàirc, choisich iad mar chòmhlán, agus pìobaire aig an ceann. ’S e am fonn a bh’ aig a’ phìobaire “The Campbells are Coming”. Bha mòran thall mu thràth, a’ feitheamh riutha.

Mus do thòisich an cluich, chaidh na sgiobannan a thaghadh. Bhiodh sin a’ tòiseachadh le ainmeachadh sgiobair airson gach taobh. Chanadh fear dhen dithis a tha sin, “Buaileam ort” agus bhiodh e a’ tilgeil a chaman don fhear eile, a ghlacadh e. Chuireadh an dithis an lamhan, tè ma seach, suas an caman, agus ’s e am fear mu dheireadh aig an robh grèim fhathast air a’ chaman a gheibheadh a’ chiad taghadh de chluicheadair. Chanadh e an uairsin, “Leigean leat”, agus bhiodh cothrom aig an sgiobair eile a’ chiad chluicheadair aigesan a thaghadh.

Chan eil an aithris ag innse cuin’ a thòisich an geama, ach lean e gu ceithir uairean feasgar. Nuair a sguir e, shuidh na cluicheadairean air an fheur agus bha cuirm mhòr aca. ’S ann nuair a leughas tu na dh’ ith iad a thuigeas tu gur ann an Ameireagaidh a Deas a bha iad. Fhuair iad *asado de carvo con cuero* – ’s e sin mairtfeòil ròsta leis a’ bhian oirre. Ach ’s ann Albannach a bha an deoch – uisge-beatha.

As dèidh na dìnnearach bha an t-àm ann airson dannsadh. Bha measgachadh ann de dhannsa Gàidhealach agus ruidhleachan. Tha e coltach gur e rud Albannach a

bh' ann air fad, ged a bha cuid nach robh nan Albannaich an làthair cuideachd. Aig leth-uair an dèidh seachd, thill na seòid do na bàtaichean is rinn iad aiseag a-null don bhaile a-rithist. Ach cha robh an gnothach deiseil. Chaidh na Gàidheil airson an suipearach ann an taigh-òsta far an do ghabh iad deoch-slàinte don Teaghlach Rìoghail agus do Cheann-suidhe Poblachd Uruguay.

An uair sin rinn an cathraiche òraid a bha a' dol eadar Beurla is Gàidhlig. Agus bha deoch-slàinte eile aca – agus rud gu math iomchaidh – gu “Tìr nam Beann, 's nan Gleann, 's nan Gaisgeach.” 'S e sin rud nach cluinnear ach glè ainneamh an là an-diugh – Tìr nam Beann, 's nan Gleann, 's nan Gaisgeach. Bhiodh e math sin a chluinntinn na bu trice. Co-dhiù, tha mi an dòchas gu bheil e fìor is gu bheil gaisgich againn fhathast air a' Ghàidhealtachd.

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Faclan na seachdainne: An Giblean: *April*; là-fèille: *holiday*; mu thràth: *already*; cuimr: *feast*; ruidhleachan: *reels*; ceann-suidhe: *president*; poblachd: *republic*; nas trice: *more often*.

Abairtean na seachdainne: eadhon an là an-diugh: *even today*; an sgìre as mò far a bheilear a' cluich iomain: *the region in which shinty is mostly played*; air a' phàirc len camain: *on the field with their camans (shinty sticks)*; aig bonn na beinne: *at the bottom of the mountain*; chuir na Gàidheil romhpa: *the Gaels decided*; bha droch choltas air an t-sìde: *the weather looked threatening*; nach do chuir sinn stad air X a-riamh: *that that never stopped X*; gu ruige bàgh air an taobh thall: *to a bay on the far side*; choisich iad mar chòmhlán: *they walked as a group*; agus pìobaire aig an ceann: *with a piper at their head*; chanadh fear dhen dithis: *one of the pair would say*; 's e am fear mu dheireadh aig an robh grèim fhathast: *it is the last one who still gripped*; lean e gu: *it continued until*; 's ann nuair a leughas tu na dh'ith iad: *it's when you read what they ate*; a thuigeas tu gur ann an Ameireagaidh a Deas a bha iad: *that you understand they were in South America*; cuid nach robh nan Albannaich: *some who were not Scots*; thill na seòid: *the heroes returned*; rinn iad aiseag: *they crossed (by ferry)*; airson an suipearach: *for their supper*; Tìr nam Beann, 's nan Gleann, 's nan Gaisgeach: *Land of the Mountains, the Glens and the Heroes*; bhiodh e math sin a chluinntinn na bu trice: *it would be good to hear that more often*; gu bheil gaisgich againn fhathast: *that we still have heroes..*

Puing-ghràmar na seachdainne: Buileam ort: *let me hit you (said at the very start of a shinty game)*. Do you recognise this grammatical construction? It is the first person singular imperative (of buail). This is the equivalent for the first person to “buail!” (“hit!”, the second person singular) and “buailibh!” (“hit!”, the second person plural). The –am or –eam ending is the giveaway for this. It occurs again in the Litir in “Leigeam leat” which is what the captain who had the first choice of a player would say to allow the opposing captain to make his first choice. This is also the first person singular imperative (of leig) and means “let me permit you”.

Gnàths-cainnt na seachdainne: ghabh iad deoch-slàinte: *they had a toast (a drink with a toast)*.

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