

# 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 at [rodny.maclea@bbc.co.uk](mailto:rodny.maclea@bbc.co.uk) \* This is Litir 326. Note that Roddy also broadcasts a simplified version – An Litir Bheag – on Monday evenings at 7.00 pm. This is also available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 22 corresponds to Litir 326 .*

Nochd leabhar ùr o chionn ghoirid anns a bheil taghadh de rosg Gàidhlig. 'S e an tìotal a th' air *Ri Linn nan Linntean*. Chaidh a dheasachadh le Richard Cox agus Colm Ó Baoill. Chan eil mi a' dol ga mholadh do luchd-ionnsachaidh a th' aig ìre bhunaiteach. Bhiodh e ro dhoirbh dhaibh, oir chan eil eadar-theangachadh ann. Ach don fheadhainn a tha fileanta gu leòr, tha stuth ann a tha gu math eachdraidheil, fiosrachail is inntinneach. Bheir mi tuilleadh fiosrachaidh mu dheidhinn mar a gheibheadh sibh grèim air an leabhar aig deireadh na Litreach.

Tha mi a' dol a thaghadh pìos de sheann Ghàidhlig bhuaithe. Ach – dhuibhse a bhios a' leughadh na Litreach – tha mi a' dol a chur riaghailtean ùra litreachaidh an sàs gus am bi e nas fhasa dhuibh a leughadh. 'S e an tìotal a th' air an earrainn seo de rosg “Na h-Eileanan Falcland” agus chaidh fhoillseachadh an toiseach ann an ochd ceud deug, ceathrad 's a dhà (1842):

Am measg nan eileanan sin a bhuineas do Bhreatainn, agus gun duine cha mhòr gan tuineachadh, tha na h-Eileanan Falcland. Tha mu thimcheall còig fichead **de na h-eileanan** a tha fon ainm seo nan laighe dlùth dha chèile, ann an cuan mòr **na h-àirde Deas**, mu cheithir cheud agus ceithir fichead mìle an taobh seo de dh' Ameireagaidh na h-àirde Deas, agus mar astar trì cheud mìle o mhaol mhòr deiseil Ameireagaidh – 's e sin *Cape Horn*.

**Tha an t-aon as mò de na h-eileanan seo mu thuaiream sia fichead mìle air fad**, agus leth-cheud mìle air leud, air a chuirteachadh le bàghan agus calachan agus ionadan acarsaid cho math, fasgach, tèarainte 's a tha san t-saoghal uile. Chan eil air an àm duine beò a' còmhnaidh air an eilean seo, an t-eilean as mò dhiubh, a tha uiread ri Muile, Ìle, 's an t-Eilean Sgitheanach le chèile, agus gu mòr nas tarbhaiche. Chan eil crodh no caoraich no eich san eilean mhòr seo, ach am feur a' grodadh air an làr o bhliadhna gu bliadhna!

**Tha an dara h-eilean as mò ceithir fichead mìle air fad** agus leth-cheud air leud. Tha caol eadar còig is sia mìltean air leud eadar an dà eilean seo – caol trom faodadh cabhlach Shasainn seòladh cho glàn, rèidh, tèarainte 's a b' urrainn duine iarraidh, agus acarsaidean fasgach air gach taobh dheth. Tha seòrsa de bhaile beag air an eilean seo, ris an can iad Port Leòdhais. Tha ochd pearsa deug a' còmhnaidh air an eilean seo, de mhuinntir Ameireagaidh mu Dheas; ach is le Breatainn iad, agus tha còir Bhreatainn air a h-aideachadh a-nis le gach rìoghachd.

Tha long-chogaidh a-nise do ghnàth ann, chum còir Bhreatainn air an eilean seo a dhìon. Tha eileanan beaga eile mun cuairt don dà eilean mhòr seo, mu mheudachd Cholla is Chanaigh is Eilean nam Muc, agus gun duine gan tuineachadh. **Tha na h-eileanan seo anabarrach uile cosmhail ri h-Innse-Gall na h-Alba...**

Uill sin e – ach bu mhath leam rudeigin a ràdh mu Phort Leòdhais? Uill, 's e Port Leòdhais a ghabh an sgrìobhadair Gàidhealach air Port Louis. Chaidh baile a chur air chois ann a sin leis na Frangaich ann an seachd ceud deug, seasgaid 's a ceithir (1764). Ach ghabh na Spàinntich thairis e trì bliadhna às dèidh sin agus chuir iadsan ainm ùr air – Puerto Soledad – “am port uaigneach”. Ach tha e coltach gun do lean na Gàidheil orra le bhith a’ cleachdadh an t-seann ainm, le dreach Gàidhealach air.

Ma tha ùidh agaibh san leabhar *Ri Linn nan Linnntean*, gheibhear fiosrachadh mu dheidhinn air an eadar-lìon aig [www.clanntuirc.co.uk](http://www.clanntuirc.co.uk).

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**Faclan na Litreach:** rosg: *prose*; tiotal: *title*; còig fichead: *100 (five twenties)*; a’ còmhnaidh: *living*; uaigneach: *lonely*.

**Abairtean na Litreach:** chaidh a dheasachadh le: *it was edited by*; bhiodh e ro dhoirbh dhaibh: *it would be too difficult for them*; mu dheidhinn mar a gheibheadh sibh grèim air an leabhar: *about how you would get hold of the book*; gun duine cha mhòr gan tuineachadh: *with hardly a person living on /colonising them*; nan laighe dlùth dha chèile: *lying close to each other*; trì cheud mìle o mhaol mhòr deiseil Ameireagaidh: *300 miles from the great southern cape of America*; ionadan acarsaid cho math, fasnach, tèarainte 's a tha san t-saoghal uile: *places of anchorage as good, sheltered and secure as any in the entire world*; a tha uiread ri Muile, Ìle, 's an t-Eilean Sgitheanach le chèile: *which is as large as Mull, Islay and Skye put together*; a' grodadh air an làr: *rotting on the ground*; caol trom faodadh cabhlach Shasainn seòladh: *a channel through which England's navy could sail*; tha còir Bhreatainn air a h-aideachadh le gach rìoghachd: *Britain's right (to sovereignty) was accepted (admitted) by every country [he obviously wasn't considering Argentina]*; tha long-chogaidh a-nise do ghnàth ann: *a warship is commonly there*; chum còir Bhreatainn a dhìon: *in order to protect Britain's right*; mu mheudachd Cholla is Chanaigh is Eilean nam Muc: *about the size of Coll and Canna and Muck*; chaidh baile a chur air chois: *a settlement was established*; le dreach Gàidhealach air: *in a Gaelic guise*.

**Puing-chànain na Litreach:** **Tha an dara h-eilean as mò ceithir fichead mìle air fad:** *the second largest island is eighty miles long. The h- before eilean has no “official” orthographic status. It could (and in an official document probably would) be left out. It is simply there to show how this would be said in speech and, of course, the Litir is, in effect, a radio script as much as a written document. There is another similar example which I left in from the original account written in 1842: **Tha na h-eileanan seo anabarrach uile cosmhail ri h-Innse-Gall na h-Alba** (these islands are very similar to the Outer Hebrides). Again the h- is there as an aid to someone reading the script out loud – it has no official orthographic status. Both of these examples should be compared with **de na h-eileanan** and **na h-àirde Deas** in which the h- is “officially” accepted as following the article “na” and preceding a noun which starts with a vowel.*

**Gnàths-cainnt na Litreach:** Tha an t-aon as mò de na h-eileanan seo mu thuaiream sia fichead mìle air fad: *the biggest [one] of these islands is approximately 120 miles long. Mu thuaiream: approximately.*

\* Tha “Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh” air a maoinachadh le Seirbheis nam Meadhanan Gàidhlig