

# 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 [rodgy.maclean@bbc.co.uk](mailto:rodgy.maclean@bbc.co.uk) \* This is Litir 328. 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 24 corresponds to Litir 328.*

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh an t-seachdain sa chaidh mu na Leathanaich a bha a’ fuireach air oighreachd ceann-cinnidh nan Siosalach, is mar a dh’fheuch an Siosalach ri dearbhadh gu robh iad ri buidseachd. Dh’aontaich a’ Chomhairle Dhìomhair ann an Dùn Èideann ri iarrtas an t-Siosalaich airson coimisean a chur air chois airson a’ chùis a sgrùdadh. Bha an Siosalach fhèin, a bhràthair agus co-oghaichean aca nam buill dhen choimisean.

Chaidh na Leathanaich don cheann-chinnidh acasan, feuch taic fhaighinn. Bha sin a dh’aindeoin ’s gu robh iad air a bhith a’ fuireach airson dhà no thrì cheud bliadhna air fearann nan Siosalach. B’ e ceann-cinnidh nan Leathanach Sir Ailean MacIlleathain à Dubhaird, ann am Muile. Chuir esan tagradh don Chomhairle Dhìomhair, agus tharraing iadsan an cead, a thug iad roimhe, don t-Siosalach, airson a’ choimisein.

Tha e inntinneach coimhead air na h-ainmean a bh’ air feadhainn de na Leathanaich. Ged is e “Maclean” a bh’ air cuid, a rèir clàr-obrach na Comhairle, cha robh air feadhainn eile ach sloinnidhean – mar eisimpleir Janet nighean Ruairidh Bhuidhe agus Katherine nighean Eòghainn mhic Coinnich. Bha aon tè ann air an robh “Bakie” mar ainm – Bakie nighean Iain Duibh Mhic Fhionnlaidh. ’S dòcha gur e “Peigi” a thathar a’ ciallachadh.

Bha na casaidean an aghaidh an t-Siosalaich gu math làidir. Chuir Sir Ailean MacIlleathain as a leth gun do ghabh e gràin mhòr air na Leathanaich a chionn ’s nach deach aige air am fuadachadh bhon fhearann aige gu laghail. Thuir e gun deach geurleanmhainn a dhèanamh air na Leathanaich. Thuir e gu robh iad air an crochadh bhon òrdagan is gun deach buinn an casan a losgadh a dh’aona-ghnothach le bhith air an cumail faisg air teine. Thuir e gur ann às dèidh gun deach droch-dhìol a dhèanamh orra, a “dh’aidich” cuid gu robh iad air a bhith an sàs ann am buidseachd.

An àite dhol a Dhùn Èideann, chaidh aontachadh gun toireadh fear de bhàillidhean Inbhir Nis sùil air an fheadhainn a bha a’ cumail a-mach gun do dh’fhuiling iad droch làimhseachadh fhad ’s a bha iad sa phrìosan fo òrdugh an t-Siosalaich. B’ esan Fionnladh Friseal. Thug e sùil air na casan is air na làmhnan aca, feuch comharra fhaicinn de ròp no losgadh no rudeigin dhen t-seòrsa sin. Tha e coltach nach do lorg e dad.

Dè thachair, ma-thà, do “bhuidsichean is bana-bhuidsichean” Shrath Ghlais? Uill, tha e coltach gun do chaochail feadhainn dhiubh sa phrìosan. B’ iad sin an fheadhainn nach do dh’aidich a-riamh gu robh iad air a bhith ri buidseachd. Ach an fheadhainn a dh’aidich – uill, tha e coltach gun d’ fhuair iadsan dheth oir cha deach an coimisean, a bha a’ dol gan sgrùdadh, ath-nuadhachadh. Tha fhathast feadhainn air a bheil “MacIlleathain” a’ fuireach anns an sgìre sin, agus tha iad ag ràdh gu bheil iad air a bhith ann a sin airson ceudan bhliadhnaichean.

’S dòcha gu bheil cuimhne agaibh air MacPheadrais – **air an tug mi iomradh** an t-seachdain sa chaidh. B’ esan am fear a bhiodh a’ “dearbhadh” gu robh duine ri

buidseachd le bhith a' stobadh prìne pràise a-steach ann. Uill, tha mi ag ràdh “fear”, ach tha e coltach nach e fear a bh' ann idir – ach boireannach a bha a' dol timcheall ann an riochd fir, le aodach fir oirre. Ann an seachd ceud deug, trithead 's a sia (1736), chaidh cur às don achd a leig le droch dhaoine mar sin prothaid a dhèanamh à fulangas dhaoine eile.

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**Faclan na Litreach:** Leathanaich: *Macleans*; buidseachd: *witchcraft, sorcery*; Dubhaird: *Duart*; geur-leanmhainn: *persecution*; dh'aidich: *admitted*; MacPheadrais: *Paterson*.

**Abairtean na Litreach:** mar a dh'fheuch an Siosalach ri dearbhadh: *how [the] Chisholm tried to prove*; dh'aontaich a' Chomhairle Dhìomhair ri: *the Privy Council agreed*; airson a' chùis a sgrùdadh: *to examine the matter*; don cheann-chinnidh acasan, feuch taic fhaighinn: *to their clan chief, in an effort to get help*; tharraing iadsan an cead: *they withdrew their permission*; na casaidean an aghaidh an t-Siosalaich: *the charges against Chisholm*; gun do ghabh e gràin mhòr air: *that he developed a great hatred towards*; a chionn 's nach deach aige air am fuadachadh bhon fhearann aige: *because he didn't succeed in putting them off his land*; gun deach buinn an casan a losgadh a dh'aonaghnothach: *that the soles of their feet were deliberately burned*; gur ann às dèidh gun deach droch-dhiòl a dhèanamh orra: *that it was after they had been ill-treated*; gun toireadh fear de bhàillidhean Inbhir Nis sùil air: *that one of the baillies of Inverness would examine*; feuch comharra fhaicinn de ròp no losgadh: *in an attempt to discern the mark of a rope or burning*; nach do lorg e dad: *that he didn't find anything*; gun do chaochail feadhainn dhiubh: *that some of them died*; gun d' fhuair iadsan dheth: *that they got off*; cha deach an coimisean ath-nuadhachadh: *the commission was not renewed*; boireannach a bha a' dol timcheall ann an riochd fir: *a woman who was going around in the guise of a man*; a leig le X prothaid a dhèanamh: *which allowed X to profit*.

**Puing-chànain na Litreach:** *A historical point this week about the appearance of the Gaelic sloinneadh in records throughout the historical Gàidhealtachd. The listing of Gaelic “surnames” as patronymics, rather than clan names, is diagnostic of the language possessing a vigour now found only in the most Gaelic communities in the west. In earlier times such terminology was common in the eastern Highlands, including the town of Inverness. The names are usually given in anglicised form but these can be readily deciphered. Although the persecuted people in Strathglass were described as “Macleans”, and owed an ancient allegiance to that clan, many were known locally by their patronymic (sloinneadh), rather than by their clan name (cinneadh). Two examples of this group, not given in the Litir, will suffice. Kathrine Nien ane oar vic ean vic Culleam would be Catrìona nighean Iain Odhair mhic Iain mhic Uilleim (Katherine daughter of dun John, son of John, son of William). And Christian Nein Farquhar vic ean would be Cairistiona nighean Fhearchair mhic Iain (Christine daughter of Farquhar, son of John).*

**Gnàths-cainnt na Litreach:** *air an tug mi iomradh: whom I mentioned.*

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