

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 * This is Litir 333. 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 29 corresponds to Litir 333.*

Bha teaghlach Thormoid MhicLeòid air a dhol a dh’fhuireach còmhla ris ann an Alba Nuadh. Ach cha robh Tormod riarichte. Tha e coltach gun d’ fhuair e cuireadh falbh gu ruige Ohio, far an robhar a’ sireadh mhiseanaraidhean Clèireach. Co-dhiù fhuair Tormod cuireadh gus nach d’ fhuair, chuir e roimhe gluasad gu Ohio. Bha e dhen bheachd gu robh Pictou a’ dol a dholaidh. Bha cus de mhuinntir an àite air an cùl a chur ri Dia. Dh’aontaich feadhainn a bha dileas dha falbh a dh’Ohio còmhla ris.

Bha iad airson a dhol ann ann am bàta. Bha iad a’ dol a sheòladh sìos costa sear Ameireagaidh, a-steach gu Gulf Mheagsago agus **an uair sin suas Abhainn Mhississippi**. B’ fheudar dhaibh soitheach a thogail. Rinn iad sin ann am Pictou.

Bhiodh cuid de mhuinntir Phictou a’ dèanamh dì-meas air na *Normanites*, mar a chanadh iad ri luchd-leantainn MhicLeòid. Chuir iad ainm air an t-soitheach – *The Ark*. Agus ’s e sin an t-ainm a chuir MacLeòid is a charaidean oirre cuideachd. Dh’fhàg i Pictou le sgioba de dh’fhir as t-Sultain ochd ceud deug ’s a naoi-deug (1819).

Thachair rudeigin neònach air an t-slighe a dh’Ohio, ge-tà. Sheòl iad gu tuath an toiseach, airson deuchainn a chur air an t-soitheach. Chaidh iad seachad air ceann a tuath Eilein Cheap Bhreatainn. An uair sin bha iad anns a’ chuan mhòr. Lean iad costa Cheap Bhreatainn gu deas agus, feasgar a bha seo, stad iad airson iasgach. Ghlac iad truisg gu leòr. Bha iad aig beul bàigh agus dh’fhuirich iad an oidhche an sin.

Air an làrna-mhàireach, thug iad sùil air an àite. Bha am bàgh brèagha. Bha e air a chuirteachadh le cnuic is coilltean. Bha na h-uisgeachan làn èisg. Agus cha mhòr gu robh neach-tuineachaidh a’ fuireach ann. Chaidh iad air tìr – far a bheil Baile Anna an-diugh. Bha na fir toilichte leis na chunnaic iad agus cho-dhùin iad fuireach an sin, seach a bhith a’ cumail orra gu ruige Ohio.

Thagh gach duine aca pìos fearainn. Thòisich iad air an talamh ullachadh airson a’ chuir as t-Earrach. Thog iad bothain. An uair sin, thill iad a Phictou airson a’ gheamhraidh. Bha iad a’ dol a thilleadh an ath bhliadhna.

Nuair a thill iad a Phictou, reic iad an *Ark*. Thòisich gach duine aca air eathar a thogail, a bheireadh iad fhèin is na teaghlaichean aca a Bhaile Anna. Dh’fhalbh seachd eathraichean còmhla as t-Earrach. Bha cuid toilichte gu robh na *Normanites* a’ falbh. Bha iad sgèth dhen chàineadh a bhiodh iad a’ faighinn bho Thormod MacLeòid. Ach bha cuid eile ann nach robh cho toilichte. Bhiodh feadhainn acasan a’ leantainn orra aig a’ cheann thall.

Cha robh cùisean furasta air an t-slighe. Dh’èirich stoirm agus chaidh na bàtaichean a sguabadh far an cùrsa. Mu dheireadh fhuair a h-uile tè ach aon tron chaolas eadar tìr-mòr Alba Nuaidh agus Ceap Breatainn. Fhuair iad fàsghadh ann am Baile Pheadair ann an ceann a deas Cheap Bhreatainn.

Ach, airson greis, cha robh sgeul air an ceannard, Tormod. Bha eathar-san air a dhol air tìr ann an Eilean a’ Phrionnsa. Ann a sin, fhuair e taic is aoiheachd bhon t-sagart, Maighstir

Aonghas, an t-Athair Urramach Aonghas MacEachairne. Ged a bhiodh Tormod gu tric a' bruidhinn a-mach an aghaidh teagasg na h-Eaglaise Caitligich, bho sin a-mach cha chanadh e droch fhacal mu na sagairt innte. Mu dheireadh, ràinig e fhèin Baile Pheadair, deiseil airson an còrr dhen t-slighe a dhèanamh don dachaigh ùir aca.

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Faclan na Litreach: riarichte: *satisfied*; dileas: *loyal*; bàgh: *bay*; Baile Anna: *St Ann's*; eathar: *small boat*; Baile Pheadair: *St Peter's*.

Abairtean na Litreach: bha X air a dhol a dh'fhuireach ann an Alba Nuadh: *X had gone to live in Nova Scotia*; far an robhar a' sireadh mhiseanaraidhean Clèireach: *where Presbyterian missionaries were being sought*; co-dhiù fhuair Tormod cuireadh gus nach d' fhuair: *whether or not Norman received an invitation*; chuir e roimhe gluasad gu Ohio: *he made up his mind to move to Ohio*; gu robh Pictou a' dol a dholaidh: *that Pictou was going to the dogs*; b' fheudar dhaibh soitheach a thogail: *they had to build a vessel*; le sgioba de dh'fhir: *with a crew of men*; thachair rudeigin neònach air an t-slighe: *something strange happened on the way*; airson deuchainn a chur air an t-soitheach: *to test the vessel*; ghlac iad truisg gu leòr: *they caught plenty of cod*; cha mhòr gu robh neach-tuineachaidh a' fuireach ann: *there was hardly a settler living there*; seach a bhith a' cumail orra: *instead of continuing*; airson a' chuir as t-Earrach: *for the planting in the Spring*; a bheireadh iad fhèin is na teaghlaichean aca: *which would carry themselves and their families*; bha iad sgèth dhen chàineadh: *they were tired of the criticism*; bhiodh feadhainn acasan a' leantainn orra aig a' cheann thall: *some of them would follow them eventually*; chaidh na bàtaichean a sguabadh far an cùrsa: *the boats were blown [swept] from their course*; fhuair a h-uile tè ach aonan tro Chaolas Chanso: *all but one of them made it through the Strait of Canso*; bha eathar-san air a dhol air tìr ann an Eilean a' Phrionnsa: *his boat had landed on Prince Edward Island*; taic is aoigheachd bhon t-sagart, Maighstir Aonghas, an t-Athair Urramach Aonghas MacEachairne: *help and hospitality from the priest, Father Angus, the Rev. Father Angus McEachern*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: an uair sin suas Abhainn Mhississippi: *then up the Mississippi River. Do you notice that river names in English carry the (definite) article (on the River Tay) whereas in Gaelic the article is missing (air Abhainn Tatha). The name itself is in the genitive case, which is why Mississippi is lenited. This can be seen in Clyde. The Gaelic is Cluaidh (as in the football team, Clyde FC) but the river is Abhainn Chluaidh. The mouth of the Clyde in Gaelic is beul Abhainn Chluaidh, without articles and with Cluaidh lenited. Do you remember what I wrote about the (unwritten) lenited "n" in last week's Litir? Abhainn Nis (The River Ness) and Inbhir Nis (Inverness) provide examples, because the Nis element is a lenited genitive. Ask a native speaker to say "a-nis" (now) and "Inbhir Nis" and listen to the (subtle) difference. The second is lenited.*

Gnàths-cainnt na Litreach: Bhiodh cuid de mhuinntir Phictou a' dèanamh dì-meas air na Normanites: *some of the people of Pictou would put down/express a disregard for the Normanites.*

* Tha "Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh" air a maoineachadh le Seirbheis nam Meadhanan Gàidhlig