

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

A special programme, in the form of a “letter”, designed for 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, Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.macleam@bbc.co.uk. This is Litir 410. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 106 corresponds to Litir 410.

Tha sinn a’ comharrachadh, anns an Litir, gum bi deich bliadhna ann an ath-mhìos bhon a fhuair muinntir Eige sealbh air an oighreachd aca. Bha iad an dòchas an t-eilean a cheannach bhon uachdaran a bh’ aca anns na naochadan, Keith Schellenberg. Ach cha robh esan deònach a reic dhaibh. Anns a’ Mhàrt naoi ceud deug, naochad ’s a còig (1995), mu ochd mìosan an dèidh do dh’Urras Eige dhol ann an làmhan nan eileanach, chuala na h-Eigich droch naidheachd. Bha an t-eilean air a reic.

Bha duilgheadasan ionmhais aig Keith Schellenberg, às dèidh sgaradh-pòsaidh a bhith aige. Reic e an t-eilean airson £1.6 millean. ’S e am fear a cheannaich e neach-ealain Gearmailteach air an robh Marlin Eckhart. Ach bha daoine na b’ eòlaiche air fon fhar-ainm aige, Maruma.

Bha e doirbh fiosrachadh fhaighinn mu Mharuma. Bhathar ag ràdh gur e adhradair-teine a bh’ ann agus gun do leugh e an t-ainm Maruma nuair a bha e a’ coimhead ann an lòn ann an Abu Dhabi. Cha robh fios aig duine ciamar a fhuair e sùim airgid mòr gu leòr airson oighreachd a cheannach. Is cha robh fios aca carson a cheannaich e i.

Chaidh Maruma a dh’Eige. Bha e air a bhith ann dìreach aon turas roimhe, a rèir choltais. Fear mòr a bh’ ann, a bha a’ smocadh fad na h-ùine. Bha luchd-naidheachd a’ dèanamh rannsachadh air, agus bha iadsan a’ cumail a-mach **nach robh airgead mar sin aige ann.** Mar sin, lean Urras Eige air, feuch an oighreachd a cheannach – a-nise bho Mharuma.

Thachair a h-uile càil a tha seo mus robh Pàrlamaid na h-Alba ann am bith. Bha Riaghaltas Tòraidheach ann an Lunnainn. Cha robh iad deònach an siostam de dh’uachdranachd phrìobhaideach air a’ Ghàidhealtachd atharrachadh, eadhon le bhith a’ toirt taic don choimhearsnachd airson an t-eilean a cheannach. Ach bha Eige air aire luchd-poilitigs. Nochd suidheachadh an eilein turas no dhà ann an Taigh nan Cumantan.

Anns an Iuchar, naoi ceud deug, naochad ’s a sia (1996), chaidh Eige a chur air ais air a’ mhargaidh. Bha Maruma ag iarraidh £2 mhillean air. Anns an Lùnastal, chuir Urras Eige iomairt air chois airson airgead a chur ri chèile a leigeadh leotha an t-eilean a cheannach. Thàinig na mìltean notaichean a-steach bho dhaoine air feadh an t-saoghail.

Bha eadhon an Riaghaltas ann an Lunnainn a’ toirt aire don ghnòthach a-nis. Chaidh Rùnaire na h-Alba, Mìcheal Forsyth, don eilean as t-Sultain. Dhearbh e gun robh e a’ tuigsinn gum b’ urrainn buannachdan tighinn bho shealbh choimhearsnachd ann an àite mar Eige.

As t-Samhain bha £1.2 millean aig an Urras. Ach cha robh sin gu leòr do Mharuma agus dhiùlt e an tagradh. Dh'fhàg e an t-eilean air a' mhargaidh, agus £2 mhilllean not air fhathast. Ach bha a' chùis a' tighinn gu ceann oir bha neach-creideis aig Maruma ag iarraidh airgead air ais a thug e mar iasad don neach-ealain Ghearmailteach. B' e reic an eilein an aon dòigh airson an t-airgead fhaighinn.

Tràth sa Ghiblean, naoi ceud deug, naochad 's a seachd (1997), chuir Urras Eige £1.5 millean air a' bhòrd. Chaidh gabhail ris. Agus fhuair na daoine sealbh air an eilean, mu dheireadh thall, air an dàrna latha deug dhen Ògmhios. Thathar fhathast a' bruidhinn mun cheilidh a bh' aca an oidhche sin!

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Faclan na Litreach: naochadan: *nineties*; Tòraidheach: *Conservative (Tory)*; neach-creideis: *creditor*.

Abairtean na Litreach: bhon a fhuair muinntir Eige sealbh air an oighreachd aca: *since the people of Eigg achieved ownership of their estate*; cha robh esan deònach a reic dhaibh: *he wasn't willing to sell it to them*; ann an làmhan nan eileanach: *in the hands of islanders*; duilgheadasan ionmhais: *financial difficulties*; às dèidh sgaradh-pòsaidh a bhith aige: *after he had been divorced*; neach-ealain Gearmailteach: *a German artist*; na b' eòlaiche air fon fhar-ainm aige: *more familiar with him under his nickname*; bhathar ag ràdh gur e adhradair-teine a bh' ann: *it was said that he was a fire-worshipper*; sùm airgid mòr gu leòr: *a large enough sum of money*; ['s e] fear mòr a bh' ann: *he was a big man*; mus robh Pàrlamaid na h-Alba ann am bith: *before the Scottish Parliament existed*; an siostam de dh' uachdranachd phrìobhaideach: *the system of private landlordism*; air aire luchd-poilitigs: *under the attention of politicians*; Taigh nan Cumantan: *House of Commons*; airson airgead a chur ri chèile a leigeadh leotha an t-eilean a cheannach: *to put together money that would allow them to buy the island*; chaidh Rùnaire na h-Alba don eilean as t-Sultain: *The Secretary of State for Scotland went to the island in September*; gum b' urrainn buannachdan tighinn bho shealbh coimhearsnachd: *that advantages could come from community ownership*; a thug e mar iasad: *that he gave as a loan*; b' e reic an eilein an aon dòigh: *the sale of the island was the only way*; chaidh gabhail ris: *it was accepted*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: **Chaidh Maruma a dh'Eige:** *Maruma went to Eigg. Gaelic learners often tend to use gu as a preposition meaning "to", while ignoring other possible prepositions. But remember the use of a (as opposed to à which means from, out of). It is used a lot with respect to place names (at least those which have no definite article) and causes lenition eg chaidh mi a Phort Rìgh (I went to Portree), chaidh mi a Thobar Mhoire (I went to Tobermory). Where the name starts with a vowel, the dh' prefix occurs eg chaidh e a dh'Obar Dheathain (he went to Aberdeen), chaidh i a dh'Inbhir Nis (she went to Inverness).*

Gnàths-cainnt na Litreach: **nach robh airgead mar sin aige ann:** *that he didn't have money like that [most definitely]. The ann at the end of this phrase has no particular grammatical function and could happily be left out without affecting the meaning. But it adds emphasis to the fact that he didn't have money like that. You are more likely to come across this usage in speech than in writing.*

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