

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 491. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 187 corresponds to Litir 491.

Anns an t-Sultain 2000, ghluais Robbie is Anne Northway don t-Srathan air a’ Pharbh. **Cha b’ ann leothasan** a bha an taigh anns am biodh iad a’ fuireach, ge-tà. Bha e air a chumail an òrdugh le Comann Bothain nam Beann – mar àite-fuirich do luchd-coiseachd. Ach a-steach choisich na Northways, beagan mhìltean air frith-rathad thar na mòintich. Cuide riutha bha dusan cù – naoi dhiubh nan cuileanan – ceathrad gèadh, meall chearcan is thunnagan, agus gearran.

Choisich iad às an Aisir Mhòr, beagan mhìltean sìos an rathad a-mach à Ceann Loch Biorbhaidh. Carson fon ghrèin a thagh iad a dh’fhuireach ann an àite a bha cho neo-ghoireasach is cho fad air falbh on a h-uile duine eile?

Anns a’ chiad dol a-mach, **’s ann leis an riaghaltas** a bha am fearann. Bha e air a cheannach o thùs mar thaic do chroitreachd anns an sgìre. Bha na Northways air fàs seachd sgìth de dh’uachdarain phrìobaideach. Nuair a chaidh am fuadachadh bhon taigh a bh’ aca air mhàl faisg air Baile Ùr an t-Slèibh, rinn iad air an iar-thuath sa mhionaid. Bha Robbie dhen bheachd gun robh e a’ leantainn air seann dòigh nan croitearan nuair a bha iad a’ strì airson còraichean fearainn le bhith a’ fuireach air an fhearann gun chead.

Ach, ged a bha mullach is ceithir ballachan aca, cha robh mòran ghoireasan aca. Chun an latha an-diugh, agus an taigh a-rithist na bhothan, chan eil uisge an tap a-staigh, chan eil an dealain ann agus chan eil connadh sam bith ann ach mòine a dh’fheumas a bhith air a buain as t-earrach.

Bha mòran dhen bheachd gun robh e car èibhinn is annasach gun robh daoine air gluasad a-steach don bhothan anns an t-Srathan. Ach cha robh na croitearan aig an robh caoraich an sin cho toilichte. Bha caoraich mhòra mhaola aca aig an robh deagh inbhe agus bha iad diombach gun robh coin, agus stoc **air nach tugadh sùil**, aig na Northways.

Tha e coltach nach robh fios aig na h-ùghdarrasan dè dhèanadh iad leis a’ chupall sin. Fhuair na Northways fios oifigeil bho bhàillidh na h-oighreachd gun robh aca ri teicheadh. Ach, air an làimh eile, fhuair iad iarrtas bho Chomhairle na Gàidhealtachd airson cìs-chomhairle! Chan eil fhios a’ m dè na seirbheisean a bha iad a’ faighinn! Agus rinn cuideigin gearain mu staid an cuid chon. Latha a bha seo, nochd poileas agus dithis bhoireannach bhon SSPCA. Thug iad na cuileanan air fad air falbh, agus dh’fhàg iad dìreach aon chù aig an teaghlach.

Chaidh a’ chùis don chùirt ann an Dòrnach anns an Fhaoilleach dà mhìle ’s a h-aon (2001). Chaill na Northways. Bha mìos aca airson falbh. Mìos a bha fuar, reòite.

Ghluais Anne a dh’Inbhir Nis. Ach dh’fhuirich Robbie anns an t-Srathan. Thàinig latha an fhuadachaidh. Ach cha tàinig oifigear siorraim no poileas sam bith. Chaidh

beagan ùine seachad. An uair sin chuala Robbie naidheachd air an rèidio bheag aige a thug misneachd dha. Bha an galar roilleach a' dol. Cha bhiodh siorram a' cur daoine a dh'àite far am biodh cunnart ann gun sgaoileadh iad an galar. Fhuair Robbie beagan seachdainean a bharrachd.

Mu dheireadh, nochd na poilis agus maoir an t-siorraim aig an doras – trì mìosan an dèidh an latha san taigh-chùirte. Shaoileadh tu gun cuireadh sin crìoch air an sgeul. Ach cha do chuir. Bha tionndadh annasach eile ann – mar a chì sinn an ath-sheachdain.

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Faclan na Litreach: An Srathan: *Strathan*; cuileanan: *puppies*; Ceann Loch Biorbhaidh: *Kinlochbervie*; neo-ghoireasach: *inconvenient*; Baile Ùr an t-Slèibh: *Newtonmore*; diombach: *displeased*; cìs-chomhairle: *council tax*; oifigear siorraim: *sheriff's officer*.

Abairtean na Litreach: Comann Bothain nam Beann: *Mountain Bothies Association*; frith-rathad thar na mòintich: *a track over the moor*; cuide riutha bha dusan cù: *along with them were a dozen dogs*; ceathrad gèadh, meall chearcan is thunnagan, agus gearran: *forty geese, a number of hens and ducks, and a pony*; às an Aisir Mhòr: *from Oldshoremore*; carson fon ghrèin a thagh iad?: *why on earth [lit. under the sun] did they choose?*; nuair a chaidh am fuadachadh bhon taigh a bh' aca air mhàl: *when they were evicted from the house they rented*; còraichean fearainn: *land rights*; chan eil connadh sam bith ann ach mòine: *there is no fuel there but peat*; a dh'fheumas a bhith air a buain as t-earrach: *which must be cut in spring*; bha caoraich mhòra mhaola aca aig an robh deagh inbhe: *they had Cheviot [big hornless] sheep which had a good reputation*; dè dhèanadh iad leis a' chupall: *what they would do with the couple*; bho bhàillidh na h-oighreachd gun robh aca ri teicheadh: *from the factor of the estate that they had to leave*; gearain mu staid an cuid chon: *a complaint about the state of their dogs*; ann an Dòrnach anns an Fhaoilleach: *in Dornoch in January*; an galar roilleach: *foot and mouth disease [lit. the slavering disease]*; gun sgaoileadh iad an galar: *that they would spread the disease*; shaoileadh tu gun cuireadh sin crìoch air an sgeul: *you'd think that would end the story*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: *I thought it was about time we revised a point I made in Litir 117 in August 2001 about the use of the preposition “le” in expressing ownership. The preposition “aig” can express current possession but not necessarily ownership. Idiomatically the sentence is usually fronted by the “is ann” construction, and that is how it appears twice in the Litir above – cha b' ann leothasan a bha an taigh (the house was not theirs) and 's ann leis an riaghaltas a bha am fearann (it is the government that owned the land). This issue is dealt with succinctly in “Scottish Gaelic in Twelve Weeks” by Roibeard Ó Maolalaigh, recently published by Birlinn. It is an updated and improved version of Hugo's “Scottish Gaelic in Three Months” (no, you can't learn it any quicker now!) If you like grammar, and want to understand how the language works, you might find this book very useful.*

Gnathas-cainnt na Litreach: *stoc air nach tugadh sùil: livestock which had not been examined [tugadh is a past passive verbal form].*

* Tha “Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh” air a maoineachadh le MG ALBA