

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 571. Note that there is also a simplified version called *An Litir Bheag* which is likewise available on the BBC website. *Litir Bheag* 267 corresponds to *Litir* 571.*

Bha Sandaidh Dòmhnallach na gheamair air oighreachd an Dail Mhòir anns a’ Mhonadh Ruadh tràth san fhicheadamh linn. Sin an oighreachd ris an canar *Mar Lodge* ann am Beurla. Bha far-ainm aig Sandaidh – am Brogach. Thàinig e gu ìre – **cha robh e na bhrogach tuilleadh** – agus bha e fhathast gun a’ mhuir fhaicinn. Latha a bha seo, choisich e tron Làirig Ghrù – astar mòr a th’ ann – gu ruige an Aghaidh Mhòr airson a dhol air an tràna. Bha e a’ falbh a dh’Inbhir Nis. Carson? Airson a’ mhuir fhaicinn! Thathar ag ràdh nach do shaoil e cus dhith!

Thathar ag aithris gun do lorg Sandaidh rudeigin anns a’ mhonadh **goirid às dèidh don Chogadh Mhòr a thighinn gu ceann**. Bha e dhen bheachd gur e a boma a bh’ ann – co-cheangailte ris a’ chogadh ann an dòigh air choreigin. Thug e an rud dhachaigh leis. Latha a bha seo uaireigin às dèidh sin, bha Sandaidh a’ sealg anns a’ mhonadh cuide ri Prionnsa na Cuimrigh agus sheall e am “boma” don phrionnsa. Thug am prionnsa leis e, agus chuir e e gu Ministreachd an Adhair. Dh’aithnich iadsan an rud sa bhad. Chan e boma a bh’ ann ach lasair-bhoillsg no *flare*.

Cha robh fios aig muinntir na Ministreachd an toiseach cò às a thàinig an lasair-bhoillsg. Bha e Gearmailteach, ceart gu leòr, ach cuimhnichibh gu bheil sinn a’ bruidhinn air a’ Chiad Chogadh an seo. Cha robh an Luftwaffe a’ toirt ionnsaigh air Alba mar a bha anns an Dàrna Cogadh. Ach bha cuimhne aig muinntir a’ Mhonaidh Ruaidh air itealan Gearmailteach a bh’ air a bhith air sgèith os an cionn anns a’ Chèitean naoi ceud deug is sia-deug (1916). Chan e plèana a bh’ ann ach bàt’-adhair dhen t-seòrsa ris an canar *Zeppelin*.

Cha b’ e sin a’ chiad turas a bha Zeppelin L20 air a bhith os cionn Bhreatainn. Aig deireadh an Fhaoillich naoi ceud deug is sia-deug, bha i air seachd bomaichean fichead a leigeil air Burton-on-Trent ann an Sasainn.

Aig toiseach a’ Chèitein bha i air ais os cionn Bhreatainn. An turas seo bha i a’ dèanamh air Alba. Bha i ag amas air an drochaid-rèile thar Linne Foirthe a sgrios. Ach bha droch shìde ann. Chaill i Linne Foirthe agus lean i oirre gu tuath. Chuala daoine ann am baile beag Inbhir Eìdh i ann am meadhan na h-oidhche. Bha solas air ann am fear de na taighean. Bha an t-eagal air muinntir an àite gun robh na Gearmailtich a’ dol a leigeil boma air a’ bhaile. Ach bha iad ag amas air targaid na bu mhotha na Inbhir Eìdh! Lean am bàt’-adhair oirre thairis air Beinn MacDuibh, thairis air a’ Mhonadh Liath agus mu dheireadh thairis air Linne Mhoireibh.

Bha Zeppelin L20 a-nise gann de chonnadh. Bha an caiptean, Kapitänleutnant Stabbert, ag iarraidh a thilleadh don Ghearmailt no a laighe sa mhuir gu siar air an

Danmhairg. Ach cha robh connadh gu leòr aige airson sin. Mar sin, rinn i air Nirribhidh. Ach bha tubaist aice ann an Nirribhidh agus chaidh an t-itealan a sgrios. Chuireadh an criutha don phrìosan mar phrìosanaich-chogaidh. Cha chuireadh Zeppelin L20 dragh air muinntir a' Mhonaidh Ruaidh – no duine sam bith eile – tuilleadh.

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Faclan na Litreach: far-ainm: *nickname*; boma: *bomb*; Prionnsa na Cuimrigh: *The Prince of Wales*; lasair-bhoills: *flare*; Gearmailteach: *German*; Inbhir Eìdh: *Inverey*; Nirribhidh: *Norway*.

Abairtean na Litreach: bha Sandaidh Dòmhnallach na gheamair: *Sandy MacDonald was a gamekeeper*; air oighreachd an Dail Mhòir anns a' Mhonadh Ruadh: *on Mar Lodge estate in the Cairngorms*; bha e fhathast gun a' mhuir fhaicinn: *he still hadn't seen the sea*; gu ruige an Aghaidh Mhòr: *to Aviemore*; thathar ag ràdh nach do shaoil e cus dhith: *it's said he didn't think too much of it [the sea]*; co-cheangailte ris a' chogadh ann an dòigh air choreigin: *linked to the war in some way or other*; latha a bha seo uaireigin às dèidh sin: *a particular day after that*; Ministreachd an Adhair: *The Air Ministry*; dh'aithnich iadsan an rud sa bhad: *they recognised the thing immediately*; a bh' air a bhith air sgèith os an cionn: *that had been flying ["on wing"] above them*; bàt'-adhair dhen t-seòrsa ris an canar: *an airship of the type called*; bha i a' dèanamh air Alba: *she was making for Scotland*; ag amas air an drochaid-rèile thar Linne Foirthe a sgrios: *aiming to destroy the railway bridge across the Firth of Forth*; bha an t-eagal air muinntir an àite: *the people of the place were frightened*; gun robh na Gearmailtich a' dol a leigeil boma: *that the Germans were going to drop a bomb*; thairis air Linne Mhoireibh: *over the Moray Firth*; gann de chonnadh: *short on [of] fuel*; gu siar air an Danmhairg: *west of Denmark*; chaidh an t-itealan a sgrios: *the aircraft was destroyed*; chuireadh an criutha don phrìosan mar phrìosanaich-chogaidh: *the crew were imprisoned as prisoners-of-war*; cha chuireadh Zeppelin L20 dragh air X tuilleadh: *Zeppelin L20 wouldn't annoy X again*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: cha robh e na bhrogach tuilleadh: *he was no longer a lad. You will know the words balach and gille for "boy, lad" – both of which are used throughout Gaelic Scotland. But there are several other words (including brogach) that mean the same thing or a particular type of boy with regard to body shape or nature; some are favoured more in particular dialects. Here's a list – see how many of them you might have heard: balachan, cnapach, giullan, plocach, ponach, proitseach, boiceanach, stobanach, gatachan, geamhta, pràbanach, lodragan, ploicean, luran, robairneach, pleòisgean, goileach, cnàimheach, broganach, maothran. And how would you address a lad in Gaelic? You might say "ille" (short for "a ghille") or "a bhalaich" but here's another nice one – "a laochain". Laochain is "little hero" but it's often used by an adult in the vocative when speaking to a boy. Sin thu fhèin a laochain! (well done, lad!)*

Gnathas-cainnt na Litreach: goirid às dèidh don Chogadh Mhòr a thighinn gu ceann: *shortly after the Great War coming to an end.*

Tha "Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh" air a maoinachadh le MG ALBA