

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.macleaen@bbc.co.uk. This is Litir 586. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 282 corresponds to Litir 586.

Bha an t-Albannach, Griogair MacGriogair, air a dhol don Fhraing. Bha e air a bhith ri foill. **Thug e a chreidsinn air** mòran dhaoine gun robh dùthaich ann am Meadhan Ameireagaidh air an robh Poyais. Chaidh mòran air slighe fhada airson a dhol a dh’fhuireach ann. Chaill iad airgead mòr. Chaill feadhainn am beatha.

Ach bu choma le MacGriogair. Bha e anns an Fhraing, a’ cur sgeama air dòigh airson Frangaich a thàladh a Phoyais mar luchd-tuineachaidh. Chuir e companaidh Fhrangach air chois. Bha aig daoine a bha ag iarraidh a dhol a dh’fhuireach ann am Poyais ri earrannan a cheannach anns a’ chompanaidh – air cosgais ceud franc gach duine.

Bha MacGriogair dhen bheachd gun robh an t-àm aige “Bun-reachd” Phoyais atharrachadh. Ann am Breatainn bha e math gu leòr a bhith a’ cumail a-mach gur e prionnsa a bh’ ann – *His Serene Highness Gregor I, Prince of Poyais*, mar a bh’ aige air fhèin. Ach anns an Fhraing, chaidh Poyais na poblachd. Agus cò an ceannard-stàite a bh’ aca? Cò ach MacGriogair fhèin!

Ach cha deach cùisean cho math dha anns an Fhraing. Mhothaich oifigearan Frangach gun robh feadhainn air cead-siubhail iarraidh airson a dhol gu dùthaich air nach cuala iad aithris riamh. Chuir iad soitheach na companaidh ann an grèim ann an Le Havre.

Thuig cuid dhen luchd-tuineachaidh nach robh cùisean mar bu chòir. Dh’iarr iad air na h-ùghdarrasan an gnothach a sgrùdadh. Chaidh oifigearan aig MacGriogair a chur an grèim. Ach cha robh sgeul air MacGriogair fhèin.

Mu dheireadh thall lorgadh MacGriogair. Bha casaidean foill air an cur às a leth. Chaidh cùis-chùirte air adhart ann an ochd ceud deug is sia air fhichead (1826). Mhair a’ chùis ceithir latha. Agus fhuair MacGriogair neoichiontach.

Goirid às dèidh sin, thill e a Lunnainn. Bha e air a chur an grèim agus chuir e seachad seachdain anns a’ phrìosan. Ach chaidh a shaoradh. Agus an do leig e seachad gnothach Phoyais? Cha do leig! Lean e air le bhith a’ reic sgeamaichean – ged nach robh e cho furasta a-nise. Bha e air sguir a ràdh gum b’ esan Prionnsa Phoyais, eadhon ann am Breatainn. Chùm e air leis an stòiridh a bh’ aige san Fhraing – gun robh na dùthchasaich air a thaghadh mar Cheann-suidhe ann am Poblachd Phoyais!

Ach bha farpais aige a-nise. Bha feadhainn eile air oifisean fhosgladh ann an Lunnainn, feuch fearann ann am “Poyais” a reic do dhaoine. Ghluais MacGriogair a dh’Alba ach bha a chridhe thall ann an Ameireagaidh. Ann an ochd ceud deug, trithead ’s a naoi (1839), ghluais e a Bhenesuèla. Leis gun robh e air sabaid airson neo-eisimeileachd ann am Bhenesuèla. Chaochail e an sin ann an ochd ceud deug, ceathrad ’s a còig (1845).

'S iongantach mura rinn MacGriogair gàire bho àm gu àm nuair a mheòraich e air an fhoill a rinn e agus mar a fhuair e dheth leis. Ach saoil an robh càil air a chogais, oir rinn e cron mòr air feadhainn a bha ro dheònach a ghealltanais a chreidsinn – gun lorgadh iad dùthaich bheartach air taobh thall a' chuain. **Bha beul brèagha aige, ach 's e an gnìomh a dhearbhas.**

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Faclan na Litreach: Griogair MacGriogair: *Gregor MacGregor*; Meadhan Ameireagaidh: *Central America*; bun-reachd: *constitution*; mhothaich: *noticed*; cùis-chùirte: *court case*; eadhon: *even*; farpais: *competition*.

Abairtean na Litreach: bha e air a bhith ri foill: *he had been involved in deceit*; bu choma le MacGriogair: *MacGregor couldn't have cared less*; bha e math gu leòr a bhith a' cumail a-mach gur e prionnsa a bh' ann: *it was good enough to make out he was a prince*; cò an ceannard-stàite a bh' aca?: *who was their head of state?*; airson Frangaich a thàladh mar luchd-tuineachaidh: *to attract French people as settlers*; bha aig daoine .. ri earrannan a cheannach: *people .. had to buy shares*; cosgais ceud franc gach duine: *the cost of a hundred francs each person*; gun robh feadhainn air cead-siubhail iarraidh: *that some people had requested a passport*; dùthaich air nach cuala iad aithris riamh: *a country they'd never heard [a report] of*; chuir iad soitheach na companaidh ann an grèim: *they put the company's vessel in custody*; nach robh cùisean mar bu chòir: *that matters weren't as they should [have been]*; lorgadh MacGriogair: *MacGregor was found*; bha casaidean foill air an cur às a leth: *fraud charges were laid against him*; fhuair e X neoichiontach: *X was found not guilty*; chaidh a shaoradh: *he was freed*; an do leig e seachad X?: *did he lay X to one side?*; gun robh na dùthchasaich air a thaghadh mar Cheann-suidhe: *that the natives had chosen him as President*; ghluais e a Bhenesùela: *he moved to Venezuela*; 's iongantach mura rinn X gàire: *X probably smiled*; nuair a mheòraich e air an fhoill a rinn e: *when he contemplated the fraud he [had] committed*; mar a fhuair e dheth leis: *how he got away with it*; an robh càil air a chogais?: *was there anything on his conscience?*; ro dheònach a ghealltanais a chreidsinn: *too willing to believe his promise*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: Thug e a chreidsinn air mòran dhaoine gun robh dùthaich ann am Meadhan Ameireagaidh air an robh Poyais: *he caused many people to believe that there was a country in Central America called Poyais. There is a big difference between thoir creideas do (believe, trust) and thoir a chreidsinn air (cause somebody to believe). Creidsinn is given by the dictionaries as a masculine noun (meaning "believing, act of believing") but in this expression it is a chreidsinn (without an apostrophe). An toir thu a chreidsinn air? (will you cause him to believe?). Thug iad a chreidsinn orm gun robh a' ghealach air a dèanamh de chàise (they made me believe that the moon was made of cheese).*

Gnathas-cainnt na Litreach: Bha beul brèagha aige, ach 's e an gnìomh a dhearbhas: *he talked a good talk, but the proof of the pudding is in the eating.*

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