

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 roddy.macleon@bbc.co.uk. This is Litir 607. Note that there is also a simplified version called *An Litir Bheag* which is likewise available on the BBC website. *Litir Bheag 303* corresponds to *Litir 607*.*

A bheil sibh eòlach air Gailearaidh Nàiseanta na h-Alba ann an Dùn Èideann? 'S toigh leam an togalach, eadar am Meall no *Mound* agus Sràid a' Phrionnsa. Agus tha cuid de na dealbhan na broinn air leth math. Ma thèid sibh a-steach don t-seòmar thaisbeanaidh mhòr, **theirig dha do làimh dheis**, agus chì sibh fear de na dealbhan a b' iongantach a rinneadh riamh air cuspair Albannach. Tha e a' lìonadh balla gu lèir. Tha e am measg nan dealbhan a bu mhotha a chunnaic mi riamh.

Anns an dealbh, tha Rìgh Albannach air tuiteam far each. Bha e fhèin is feadhainn eile a' sealg fhiadh air a' Ghàidhealtachd. Tha an Rìgh – Alasdair III – na laighe air an talamh **ann an cunnart a bheatha**. Tha damh feargach a' bagairt air. Tha fear eile a' dol a chur sleagh anns an damh airson a mharbhadh. Tha coin ann, sealgairean agus eich eile.

Tha an dealbh làn gluasaid agus dànadas agus, tha mi cinnteach, propaganda. Às leth cò, ge-tà? Uill, thig sin am bàrr a dh'aithghearr. Tha Siorrachd Rois agus Eilean Leòdhais am measg nan àiteachan le ceangal do na daoine a dh'iarr an dealbh agus a phàigh airgead mòr air a shon.

'S e an t-ainm a th' air an dealbh *Alexander III of Scotland Rescued from the Fury of a Stag by the Intrepidity of Colin Fitzgerald*. Tha an tiotal car fada agus bidh daoine a' gabhail *The Death of the Stag* air ann am Beurla. Bho seo a-mach, canaidh mi *Bàs an Daimh* ris.

Bha e air a dhèanamh leis a' pheantair Ameireaganach, Benjamin West. B' e seo, fhad 's as aithne dhomh, an aon dealbh a rinn West air cuspair Albannach. Chan eil fhios agam an robh e eadhon air a' Ghàidhealtachd riamh.

Rugadh West ann am Pennsylvania ann an seachd ceud deug, trithead 's a h-ochd (1738). Bha athair na òstair. 'S e fèin-ionnsachadh a rinn e, a rèir chohtais, agus cha d' fhuair e mòran foghlaim foirmeil. Bhiodh e ag ràdh mu dheidhinn fhèin gun do dh'ionnsaich e mar a dhèanadh e peant le crèadh agus geir bho thùsanaich a bha a' fuireach anns an sgìre aige.

Fhuair fear Albannach a bha a' fuireach ann am Philadelphia eòlas air West. B' esan Uilleam Mac a' Ghobhainn, a bhuineadh do dh'Obar Dheathain. Bha Mac a' Ghobhainn air pàipear fhoillseachadh ann an Alba le a bheachdan air foghlam. Fhuair Benjamin Franklin grèim air a' phàipear agus dh'iarr e air Mac a' Ghobhainn a dhol a Philadelphia airson teagasg anns an acadamaidh (nise Oilthigh Pennsylvania).

Nuair a bha Mac a' Ghobhainn na Phròbhost anns an acadamaidh, chunnaic e fear de na dealbhan aig Benjamin West. Thug e taic do West. Chuir e am peantair ann an aithne nan daoine a bu bheartaiche ann am Pennsylvania. Fhuair West eòlas air Benjamin Franklin fhèin.

Ann an seachd ceud deug is seasgad (1760), le taic airgid bho Mhac a' Ghobhainn agus Uilleam Allen, am fear a bu bheartaiche ann am Philadelphia, chaidh West gu ruige An Eadailt airson na sgilean peantaidh aige a leasachadh. Trì bliadhna às dèidh sin, ghluais e a Shasainn far an d' fhuair e coimisean bhon Rìgh – Deòrsa III – airson dealbhan a pheantadh de bhuill an teaghlaich rìoghail. Agus an ath-sheachdain innsidh mi dhuibh mar a pheant e Bàs an Daimh.

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Faclan na Litreach: Gailearaidh Nàiseanta na h-Alba: *The National Gallery of Scotland*; Sràid a' Phrionnsa: *Princes Street*; sleagh: *spear*; coin: *dogs*; sealgairean: *hunters*; Siorrachd Rois: *Ross-shire*; Eilean Leòdhais: *The Isle of Lewis*; Bàs an Daimh: *The Death of the Stag*; tùsanaich: *indigenous people*; Uilleam Mac a' Ghobhainn: *William Smith*; An Eadailt: *Italy*.

Abairtean na Litreach: tha cuid de na dealbhan na broinn air leth math: *some of the pictures inside it are excellent*; fear de na dealbhan a b' iongantach a rinneadh riamh air cuspair Albannach: *one of the most amazing pictures ever made on a Scottish subject*; a' lìonadh balla gu lèir: *filling an entire wall*; air tuiteam far each: *has fallen from a horse*; a' sealg fhiadh: *hunting deer*; tha damh feargach a' bagairt air: *an angry stag is threatening him*; làn gluasaid agus dànadas: *full of movement and boldness*; às leth cò, ge-tà?: *on behalf of whom, however?*; thig sin am bàrr a dh' aithghearr: *that will soon become apparent*; a dh' iarr an dealbh agus a phàigh airgead mòr air a shon: *who commissioned the painting and paid a large sum for it*; bha athair na òstair: *his father was a publican*; 's e fèin-ionnsachadh a rinn e: *he was self-taught*; mar a dhèanadh e peant le crèadh agus geir: *how to make paint with clay and grease*; chuir e am peantair ann an aithne nan daoine a bu bheartaiche: *he introduced the painter to the richest people*; airson na sgilean peantaidh aige a leasachadh: *to develop his painting skills*; coimisean bhon Rìgh – Deòrsa III: *a commission from the King – George III*; airson dealbhan a pheantadh de bhuill an teaghlaich rìoghail: *to paint pictures of members of the royal family*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: **theirig dha [air] do làimh dheis:** *go to your right. You will be aware that the verb “to go” – rach – is an irregular one. In theory, the second person imperative forms are rach and rachaibh so we'd say rach/rachaibh sìos an rathad for “go down the road”. However, in reality, you will rarely hear these forms in everyday speech. In some dialects a future tense form is used as an imperative ie thèid sìos an rathad. But you are most likely to hear theirig/theirigibh sìos an rathad or thalla/thallaibh sìos an rathad, employing what appear to be defective or incomplete verbs that take the place of rach in these instances – neither verb appears in any other guise than the imperative (and note that the singular forms are more common than the plural). If somebody asks you for directions in Gaelic try “theirig” on them!*

Gnathas-cainnt na Litreach: **ann an cunnart a bheatha:** *in mortal danger.*

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