

# 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](mailto:rodny.macleam@bbc.co.uk). This is Litir 608. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 304 corresponds to Litir 608.*

Tha an dealbh iongantach *Bàs an Daimh* ann an Gailearaidh Nàiseanta na h-Alba ann an Dùn Èideann. 'S e dealbh mòr a th' ann. Tha e trì puing a seachd (3.7) meatair ann an àirde agus còrr air còig puing a dhà (5.2) meatair ann an leud. Tha an dealbh, leis a' pheantair Ameireaganach, Benjamin West, a' sealltainn Cailean – no Colin – Fitzgerald a' sàbhaladh beatha Rìgh Alasdair III bho dhamh fiadhaich. Ach cò bh' ann an Cailean Fitzgerald?

Uill, bha e na shinnsear, a rèir beul-aithris, don fhear a dh'iarr an dealbh – agus a phàigh ochd ceud gini air a shon anns na h-ochdadan dhen ochdamh linn deug (1780an) – Francis Humberston MacCoinnich. Às dèidh bàs a bhràthar, ghabh e thairis ceannas Clann 'ic Coinnich. Agus, bliadhnaichean às dèidh gun do nochd an dealbh, bha tiotal air a bhuileachadh air – Mòrair Shìophort. Nuair a bha e na ghille aig Eton, aig aois dusan bliadhna, ghabh MacCoinnich fiabhras a dh'fhàg bodhar e. Cha robh a chainnt uabhasach soilleir air sgàth a bhoidhre.

Bhathar a' creidsinn o shean gun robh dualchas làn-Cheilteach aig Clann 'ic Coinnich. Ach, anns an ochdamh linn deug, dh'fheuch àrd-urrachan na fine ri dearbhadh gun do dh'èirich iad à dualchas Anglo-Normanach-Èireannach. Dh'fhoillsich iad na bh' aca ann am beul-aithris – gum b' e tùsair na fine Cailean Fitzgerald, mac aig iarla Èireannach. B' fheudar do Chailean Èirinn fhàgail. Bha sin anns an treas linn deug. Thug Rìgh na h-Alba comraich dha. B' e an Rìgh sin Alasdair III.

A rèir choltais cha do dhìochuimhnich Cailean gun robh an Rìgh air cobhair a dhèanamh air. Tha cuid ag ràdh gun tug e taic don Rìgh an aghaidh nan Lochlannach, nuair a rinn na h-Albannaich a' chùis orra. Air sàillibh sin, thug an Rìgh fearann dha ann an Cinn Tàile, a' gabhail a-steach Eilean Donan, far a bheil an caisteal ainmeil. Tha feadhainn eile ag ràdh gun d' fhuair e am fearann sin leis gun do shàbhail e beatha an Rìgh.

A rèir an stòiridh seo, bha Cailean a' sealg cuide ris an Rìgh. Thug damh ionnsaigh air an Rìgh. Bha Alasdair ann an cunnart a bheatha. Thàinig Cailean eatarra. Chaidh e fhèin agus an damh an glaic a chèile agus mharbh Cailean an damh. Anns an dealbh *Bàs an Daimh*, chithear Cailean Fitzgerald le sleagh na làimh, gu bhith a' cur an daimh gu bàs, fhad 's a tha an Rìgh na laighe air an talamh.

Ach carson a bha e cho cudromach do Francis Humberston MacCoinnich a bhith a' sealltainn an tachartais seo ann an dealbh cho mòr is cho cosgail? Uill, tha

poilitigs a' tighinn a-steach don ghnothach, agus 's e **sin as coireach** gu bheil cuid ag ràdh nach eil anns an dealbh ach propaganda.

Suas gu deireadh an t-seachdamh linn deug, bha Clann 'ic Coinnich air a bhith dìleas do rìghrean na h-Alba. Chaidh an tiotal "Iarla Shìophort" a bhuileachadh – airson a' chiad turais – air Cailean MacCoinnich ann an sia ceud deug, fichead 's a trì (1623). Ach chaill na Stiùbhartaich a' chathair rìoghail. Thaobhaich na ceathramh agus còigeamh iarlan ris na Seumasaich. Mar a ch'inn an-ath-sheachdain, 's dòcha gur ann air sgàth a' cho-dhùnaidh sin, aig a' cheann thall, a chaidh Bàs an Daimh a pheantadh.

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**Faclan na Litreach:** iongantach: *amazing*; Bàs an Daimh: *The Death of the Stag*; Gailearaidh Nàiseanta na h-Alba: *The National Gallery of Scotland*; comraich: *sanctuary*; Cinn Tàile: *Kintail*; a' sealg: *hunting*; eatarra: *between them*; sleagh: *spear*.

**Abairtean na Litreach:** ann an leud: *in width*; a' sàbhaladh beatha Rìgh Alasdair III bho dhamh fiadhaich: *saving the life of King Alexander III from an angry stag*; bha e na shinnsear: *he was an ancestor*; a phàigh ochd ceud gini air a shon: *who paid 800 guineas for it*; ghabh e thairis ceannas Clann 'ic Coinnich: *he took over the leadership of the Clan MacKenzie*; às dèidh gun do nochd an dealbh: *after the picture appeared*; bha tiotal air a bhuileachadh air – Mòrair Shìophort: *he was granted a title – Lord Seaforth*; fiabhras a dh'fhàg bodhar e: *a fever that left him deaf*; cha robh a chainnt uabhasach soilleir air sgàth a bhoidhre: *his speech wasn't very clear because of his deafness*; bhathar a' creidsinn o shean: *it was believed in olden times*; dualchas làn-Cheilteach: *a pure Celtic heritage*; dh'fheuch àrd-urrachan na fine ri dearbhadh: *the clan leaders tried to prove*; tùsair na fine: *the progenitor of the clan*; mac aig iarla Èireannach: *a son of an Irish earl*; cha do dhìochuimhnich Cailean: *Colin didn't forget*; an aghaidh nan Lochlannach: *against the Norse*; nuair a rinn na h-Albannaich a' chùis orra: *when the Scots defeated them*; an glaic a chèile: *wrestling with each other*; suas gu deireadh an t-seachdamh linn deug: *up until the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century*; dìleas do rìghrean na h-Alba: *loyal to the kings of Scotland*; chaidh X a bhuileachadh air: *X was bestowed upon him*; chaill na Stiùbhartaich a' chathair rìoghail: *the Stuarts lost the throne*; thaobhaich na ceathramh agus còigeamh iarlan ris na Seumasaich: *the fourth and fifth earls sided with the Jacobites*; 's dòcha gur ann air sgàth a' cho-dhùnaidh sin: *perhaps it's because of that decision*.

**Puing-chànain na Litreach:** Tha e trì puing a seachd meatair ann an àirde: *it's 3.7 metres in height. Some units of measurement tend not to pluralize in the standard manner. For example, while we'd say 3.7 òirlich and 3.7 troighean, employing the plural forms of the nouns òirleach (inch) and troigh (foot), we tend not to pluralize slat (yard), meatair or mìle (we'd say 3.7 slat rather than 3.7 slatan, 3.7 meatair rather than 3.7 meatairean and 3.7 mìle rather than 3.7 mìltean). Cilemeatair also tends not to pluralize so we'd say 3.7 cilemeatair (3.7 km for short).*

**Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach:** 's e **sin as coireach** gu bheil cuid ag ràdh: *that is why some people say.*

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