

# Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

## Tòmas Garnett agus Tobar Leac an t-Sagairt

*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.maclea@bbc.co.uk](mailto:rodny.maclea@bbc.co.uk). This is Litir 670. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 366 corresponds to Litir 670.*

'S ann tric, nuair a tha mi a' coimhead air mapaichean dhen Ghàidhealtachd, a bhios mi a' mothachadh ainm-àite inntinneach a tha ag innse dhomh gu bheil stòiridh co-cheangailte ris. Gu mì-fhortanach, uaireannan **tha e doirbh no eadhon do-dhèante** an stòiridh a lorg.

O chionn ghoirid thàinig mi tarsainn air ainm dhen t-seòrsa sin ann am Muile – beinn air a bheil *Maol Tobar Leac an t-Sagairt*. Tha e ann am meadhan ceann a deas an eilein. Tha e faisg air an rathad eadar Creag an Iubhair, às am faighear bàt'-aiseig chun an Òbain, agus Fionnphort, às am faighear bàt'-aiseig gu ruige Ì Chaluim Chille.

*Maol Tobar Leac an t-Sagairt*. Feumaidh gu bheil tobar faisg air làimh. Agus, nuair a tha thu ga ghoogladh air an eadar-lìon, tha gu dearbh fear ann – Tobar Leac an t-Sagairt. Ach cò sagart a bh' ann? Agus carson a chaidh an tobar ainmeachadh air a shon?

Uill, bha Tòmas Garnett ann anns a' bhliadhna seachd ceud deug, naochad 's a h-ochd (1798), agus fhuair esan an stòiridh. Sgrìobh e mu dheidhinn anns an leabhar aige *Observations on a Tour Through the Highlands and Part of the Western Isles of Scotland*. Tha e a' dol air ais do linn Chaluim Chille.

Chaochail sagart a bh' ann an Torasaigh, ann an taobh sear Mhuile, a' fàgail beàrn ann do chuideigin eile a bheathachadh fhaighinn an sin. Bha gu leòr de shagartan a' fuireach còmhla ri Calum Cille ann an Eilean Ì. Agus dh'iarr dithis aca air Calum Cille am beathachadh fhaighinn ann an Torasaigh.

Cha robh Calum Cille airson dragh a chur air duine seach duine aca. Mar sin, thuir e riutha – am fear a bu luaithe a ruigeadh Torasaigh, 's e a gheibheadh a bheathachadh. Ach 's e an oidhche a bh' ann, agus thoirmisg e an dithis bho bhith a' tòiseachadh gus an tigeadh a' mhadainn. Chan eil dùil gun d' fhuair sagart seach sagart cadal.

An ath mhadainn, dh'fhalbh fear dhiubh na bu tràithe na 'm fear eile. Lorg an sagart eile a' chiad fhear, agus e na laighe marbh ri taobh an tobair. Bha dùil gun robh e air uiread de chabhaig a dhèanamh 's gun do dh'òl e cus uisge, agus gur e sin a thug bàs dha. Bha cuid, ge-tà, dhen bheachd gun robh an dàrna sagart air am fear eile a mhurt, airson dèanamh cinnteach gum faigheadh e a bheathachadh. Co-dhiù, chaidh an tobar ainmeachadh airson an t-sagairt. Tha e a' giùlain an ainm fhathast – Tobar Leac an t-Sagairt.

Nuair a leugh mi barrachd de dh'earrann leabhar Gharnett mu a thuras a Mhuile, thàinig mi tarsainn air cunntas inntinneach de sheanfhacl Gàidhlig a chuala

an t-ùghdar: Sgrìobh e mar seo e: ***Is mairg a loisgeadh a thiompan ris***. Seo mar a tha e ga mhìneachadh anns an leabhar: *Among the proverbs which are common in this and some of the islands is the following one: when you meet with ingratitude from a person who has benefited by your means, where you had reason to expect a very different conduct, it is common to say, “what a fool I was to burn my harp for him or her”*. Is mairg a loisgeadh a thiompan ris. Bheir mi sùil air an t-seanfhaical sin anns an ath Litir.

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**Faclan na Litreach:** Muile: *Mull*; tobar: *well*; leac: *slab, flagstone, flat gravestone*; sagart: *priest*; chaochail: *died*; Torasaigh: *Torosay*; thoirmisg: *forbade*; tiompan: *musical instrument*.

**Abairtean na Litreach:** a’ mothachadh ainm-àite inntinneach: *noticing an interesting place-name*; gu bheil stòiridh co-cheangailte ris: *that a story is connected to it*; meadhan ceann a deas an eilein: *the middle of the southern part of the island*; Creag an Iubhair, às am faighear bàt’-aiseig chun an Òbain: *Craignure, from where a ferry is taken to Oban*; gu ruige Ì Chaluim Chille: *to Iona*; nuair a tha thu ga ghoogladh air an eadar-lìon: *when you google it on the internet*; beàrn ann do chuideigin eile a bheathachadh fhaighinn: *a gap [opportunity] for somebody else to get his benefice*; dh’iarr dithis aca air Calum Cille am beathachadh fhaighinn: *two of them asked Columba for their benefice*; cha robh X airson dragh a chur air duine seach duine: *X didn’t want to annoy either man*; am fear a bu luaithe a ruigeadh: *the one that more quickly reached*; ’s e a gheibheadh: *he’s the one that would get*; gus an tigeadh a’ mhadainn: *until the morning would come*; chan eil dùil gun d’ fhuair sagart seach sagart norrag cadail: *it’s not expected that either priest got a wink of sleep*; marbh ri taobh an tobar: *dead beside the well*; gun do dh’òl e cus uisge: *that he drank too much water*; a thug bàs dha: *that caused his death*; gun robh X air am fear eile a mhurt: *that X had murdered the other one*; cunntas inntinneach de sheanfhaical Gàidhlig a chuala an t-ùghdar: *an interesting account of a Gaelic proverb the author heard*.

**Puing-chànain na Litreach:** ***Is mairg a loisgeadh a thiompan ris***: *pity [the person] who would burn his harp for him. We’ll see a variation of this in next week’s Litir. The story behind the proverb is explained in the Litir above. Mairg (dialectally meirg) is both a feminine noun meaning “pity, woe, subject of regret” and an adjective meaning “pitiable, deplorable, woeful”. It is rather old-fashioned today and generally only found in proverbs and expressions, usually combined with the assertive verb, is. Here are some examples: a’ mhairg dhut “woe to you”; is mairg dhut nach tigeadh tu “it’s a pity you could not come”; is mairg a dhèanadh subhachas ri dubhachas fir eile “pity him who rejoices in another’s woe”.*

**Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach:** ***tha e doirbh no eadhon do-dhèante: it’s difficult or even impossible.***

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