

# Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

## Caisteal Eilean Donnain (2)

*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 824. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 520 corresponds to Litir 824.*

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh mu Chaisteal Eilean Donnain. 'S iomadh stòiridh a tha co-cheangailte ris. Thathar ag ràdh gun robh ceann-cinnidh **Clann 'ic Mhathain** a' fuireach ann ri linn Rìgh Alasdair II. Fhuair an ceann-cinnidh comas cainnt nan eun a thuigsinn. Thug sinn buannachdan dha. Chaidh e a-null thairis far an do rinn e fortan. Nuair a thill e a dh'Alba, dh'iarr an Rìgh air caisteal a thogail air Eilean Donnain airson a bhith a' dìon na rioghachd.

A rèir eachdraidh Clann 'ic Coinnich bha smachd aig an fhine sin air an eilean anns an treas linn deug. Ann an dà cheud deug, seasgad 's a sia (1266), ann an Co-chòrdadh Pheairt, leig na Lochlannaich seachad an smachd air taobh an iar na h-Alba. Bha Iarla Rois ag iarraidh Caisteal Eilean Donnain dha fhèin, ach dhìon Clann 'ic Coinnich e. Thathar ag ràdh cuideachd gun robh am Brusach a' fuireach ann thairis air a' gheamhradh ann an trì cheud deug 's a sia (1306) agus trì cheud deug 's a seachd (1307).

Anns a' cheathramh linn deug, nochd Clann 'ic Rath ann an Cinn Tàile. Ghabh Clann 'ic Coinnich earbsa annta, agus 's iad Clann 'ic Rath a bha a' dìon a' chaisteil bho sin a-mach. Tha ceangal eadar an caisteal agus Clann 'ic Rath chun an latha an-diugh.

Chaidh a sgrios anns an ochdamh linn deug. Bha na Spàinntich a' toirt taic do na Seumasaich ann an seachd ceud deug is naoi-deug (1719). Bha dùil gun tigeadh deich mìle saighdear Spàinnteach don Ghàidhealtachd airson a bhith an sàs ann an ar-a-mach. Thàinig armailt bheag de thri cheud dhiubh a Loch Dubhthaich anns a' Ghiblean. Ghabh iad smachd air Caisteal Eilean Donnain, ged a bha an togalach ann an droch staid.

Bha feachdan an riaghaltais air an tòir. Nochd trì soithichean cogaidh anns an loch anns a' Chèitean. Thug iad ionnsaigh air a' chaisteal len gunnaichean mòra. Nuair a fhuair iad grèim air a' chaisteal, fhuair iad a-mach gun robh a' chuid a bu mhotha de na saighdearan Spàinnteach air teicheadh. Leig iad an caisteal gu làr le seachd air fhichead baraillean fùdair-gunna. Air an deicheamh latha dhen Ògmhios rinn armailt Bhreatannach a' chùis air a' chòrr de na Spàinntich ann am Blàr Ghleann Seile – faisg air beinn air a bheil 'Sgùrr nan Spàinnteach'.

Bha an caisteal na thobhta chun an fhicheadamh linn. Eadar deireadh a' Chiad Chogaidh agus naoi ceud deug, trithead 's a dhà (1932), rinn an Lt. Coirneal Iain MacRath-Gilstrap ath-thogail air. 'S fìor thoigh le luchd-turais an t-àite. Cha chreid mi nach e Eilean Donnain an treas caisteal Albannach as motha dhan tèid luchd-turais.

An-uiridh, bha mi fhìn 's a' bhean agam a' cur seachad beagan làithean air a' Chomraich. Cosgaidh e uair a thìde is cairteal dràibheadh eadar a' Chomraich agus Eilean Donnain agus chan eil rathad dìreach ann eatarra. Co-dhiù, bha a' bhean agam **air a cois** tràth, agus air chuairt a-muigh, nuair a stad càr ri a taobh. Bha seo aig sia uairean sa mhadainn. Dh'fhosgail tè – neach-turais à dùthaich chèin – uinneag, agus dh'fhaighnich i, 'An e seo an rathad gu Eilean Donnain?' Uaireannan, tha mapa no *sat-nav* gu math feumail!

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**Faclan na Litreach:** Eilean Donnain: *Eilean Donan*; buannachdan: *advantages*; Co-chòrdadh Pheairt: *The Treaty of Perth*; am Brusach: [*Robert*] *the Bruce*; ar-a-mach: *rebellion*; Blàr Ghleann Seile: *the Battle of Glenshiel*.

**Abairtean na Litreach:** 'S iomadh stòiridh a tha co-cheangailte ris: *many stories are connected to it*; fhuair an ceann-cinnidh comas cainnt nan eun a thuigsinn: *the clan chief obtained the ability to understand the speech of birds*; chaidh e a-null thairis; *he went overseas*; bha smachd aig an fhine sin air X: *that clan controlled X*; nochd Clann 'ic Rath ann an Cinn Tàile: *Clan MacRae appeared in Kintail*; ghabh Clann 'ic Coinnich earbsa annta: *the MacKenzies trusted them*; chaidh a sgrios: *it was destroyed*; bha na Spàinntich a' toirt taic do na Seumasaich: *the Spanish were assisting the Jacobites*; bha dùil gun tigeadh deich mìle saighdear: *it was expected that ten thousand soldiers would come*; bha feachdan an riaghaltais air an tòir: *government forces were in pursuit of them*; trì soithichean cogaidh: *three warships*; anns a' Chèitean: *in May*; thug iad ionnsaigh air a' chaisteal len gunnaichean mòra: *they attacked the castle with their big guns*; gun robh a' chuid a bu mhotha de na saighdearan air teicheadh: *that most of the soldiers had fled*; leig iad an caisteal gu làr le seachd air fhichead baraillean fùdair-gunna: *they destroyed the castle with 27 barrels of gunpowder*; rinn armailt Bhreatannach a' chùis air X: *a British force defeated X*; bha an caisteal na thobhta chun an fhicheadamh linn: *the castle was a ruin until the 20<sup>th</sup> century*; an treas caisteal Albannach as motha dhan tèid luchd-turais: *the third most visited Scottish castle*; cosgaidh e uair a thìde is cairteal dràibheadh eadar a' Chomraich agus Eilean Donnain: *it takes an hour and a quarter to drive between Applecross and Eilean Donan*; neach-turais à dùthaich chèin: *a tourist from a foreign country*.

**Puing-chànain na Litreach:** ceann-cinnidh Clann 'ic Mhathain: *the clan chief of the Mathesons*. When we use *clann* to mean 'clan', it is followed by the genitive form of the clan's name and can take two forms, including or excluding 'mac'. In some clan names, both forms are used eg Clann 'ic Coinnich or Clann Choinnich (*MacKenzies*). In some, only the 'mac' form is used eg Clann 'ic Leòid (*MacLeods*), Clann 'ic Aoidh (*Mackays*), Clann 'ic Rath (*MacRaes*). In others the 'mac' form is not used eg Clann Dòmhnail (*MacDonalds*), Clann an Toisich (*MacIntoshes*).

**Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach:** bha a' bhean agam **air a cois** tràth: *my wife was up early*.

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