

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

An t-Eilean Bàn (1)

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. This is Litir 839. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 535 corresponds to Litir 839.

Nach eil e iongantach cho tric 's a bhios sinn a' dràibheadh seachad air àite inntinneach, gun a bhith a' dol a-steach. 'Feumaidh mi a dhol ann uaireigin,' tha sinn ag ràdh. Tha sinn a' cur dàil ann. Agus uaireannan, bidh bliadhnaichean a' dol seachad mus stad sinn an càr airson a dhol a-steach.

Agus 's ann mar sin a bha e dhomh fhìn, agus an t-Eilean Bàn. Bidh fios aig mòran agaibh gu bheil drochaid an Eilein Sgitheanaich a' dol thar a' chaolais eadar Caol Loch Aillse agus Caol Àcain, agus gu bheil i a' dol thar an Eilein Bhàn. Uill, o chionn ghoirid, stad mi an càr agus chaidh mi a choimhead air an eilean. Agus 's e àite brèagha a th' ann.

Tha e car ainmeil an-diugh oir rinn Gabhainn Maxwell a dhachaigh ann. Tha Maxwell ainmeil airson an leabhair 'Ring of Bright Water'. Cheannaich e na taighean anns an Eilean Bàn ann an naoi ceud deug, seasgad 's a trì (1963). 'S e muinntir an taigh-sholais a bha a' fuireach annta roimhe sin, oir tha taigh-solais mòr air ceann an iar-dheas an eilein. **Nuair a rinneadh an taigh-solais fèin-obrachail** aig toiseach nan seasgadan, chuir Bòrd Taighean-solais a' Chinn a Tuath na taighean-còmhnaidh anns an eilean air a' mhargaidh. Agus cheannaich Gabhainn Maxwell iad.

Aig an àm sin, ge-tà, bha Maxwell fhathast a' fuireach ann an Sanndaig faisg air Gleann Eilg – an t-àite air an do chuir e fhèin *Camusfeàrna* mar ainm. **'S ann anns a' bhliadhna** seasgad 's a h-ochd (1968) a chaidh e a dh'fhuireach anns an Eilean Bàn làn-thìde, às dèidh gun deach an taigh aige ann an Sanndaig a sgrios le teine.

Bha na taighean, a tha ceangailte ri chèile, airson dà theaghlach oir bha dithis ag obrachadh an taigh-sholais. Chaidh am balla eatarra a leagail agus rinneadh seòmar mòr fada air a bheil an-diugh *'The Long Room'*. Chaidh sin a dhèanamh na thaigh-tasgaidh do Mhaxwell, a' taisbeanadh litrichean is sgrìobhaidhean aige agus rudan a bhuineadh do a bheatha. Tha an taisbeanadh inntinneach, ged nach robh Maxwell anns an eilean fada oir chaochail e ann an seasgad 's a naoi (1969). Tha mi toilichte ri aithris gu bheil cairtean fiosrachaidh mun taisbeanadh rim faighinn ann an Gàidhlig cuideachd.

Bha Maxwell a-riamh airson diofar dhòighean fheuchainn airson bith-beò a dhèanamh. Tha daoine air taobh an iar na Gàidhealtachd fhathast ga chuireadh airson cho gann 's a tha an cearban, oir bha gnìomhachas aige stèidhichte air sealg an èisg sin. Chan eil mi cinnteach a bheil e airidh air an droch chliù sin ach tha e car annasach oir tha Maxwell ainmeil airson a bhith na 'neach-glèidhteachais'.

Co-dhiù, cha robh Maxwell fada a' fuireach anns an Eilean Bhàn mus do thòisich e air planaichean a chur ri chèile airson an eilein. Bha e a' dol a chruthachadh sù prìobhaideach, le ainmhidhean ann a bha dùthchasach do dh'Alba. Tha fhios gum biodh dòbhrain am measg sin. Bhiodh luchd-turais a' dol don sù bhon Eilean Sgitheanach ann an eathar.

Bha planaichean aige cuideachd airson a bhith a' brosnachadh na lacha Lochlannaich gus a neadachadh anns an eilean. Bhiodh e an uair sin a' cruinneachadh na clòimhtich bho na neadan aca. Air sàillibh a bhàis, cha do thachair gin dhiubh sin, ged a chithear lachan Lochlannach fhathast ann an uisgeachan an Eilein Bhàn.

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Faclan na Litreach: taigh-solais: *lighthouse*; Bòrd Taighean-solais a' Chinn a Tuath: *The Northern Lighthouse Board*; taighean-còmhnaidh: *dwelling houses*; taisbeanadh: *exhibition*; chaochail e: *he died*; cairtean fiosrachaidh: *information cards*; sealg: *hunting*; neach-glèidhteachais: *conservationist*; eathar: *boat*.

Abairtean na Litreach: Feumaidh mi a dhol ann uaireigin: *I must go in sometime*; 's ann mar sin a bha e dhomh fhìn: *that's how it was for me*; thar a' chaolais eadar Caol Loch Aillse agus Caol Àcain: *across the channel between Kyle of Lochalsh and Kyleakin*; 's e muinntir an taigh-sholais a bha a' fuireach annta roimhe sin: *it's the lighthouse folk that were living in them before that*; às dèidh gun deach an taigh aige ann an Sandaig a sgrìos le teine: *after his house in Sandaig was destroyed by fire*; chaidh am balla eatarra a leagail: *the wall between them was taken down*; rudan a bhuineadh do a bheatha: *things that belonged to his life*; diofar dhòighean fheuchainn airson bith-beò a dhèanamh: *trying different ways to make a living*; fhathast ga choireachadh airson cho gann 's a tha an cearban: *still blame him for how scarce the basking shark is*; a bheil e airidh air an droch chliù sin: *if he is worthy of that bad reputation*; bha e a' dol a chruthachadh sù prìobhaideach: *he was going to create a private zoo*; le ainmhidhean ann a bha dùthchasach do dh'Alba: *with animals in it that were native to Scotland*; tha fhios gum biodh dòbhrain am measg sin: *it's certain that that would include otters*; airson a bhith a' brosnachadh na lacha Lochlannaich gus a neadachadh anns an eilean: *to encourage the eider duck to nest on the island*; bhiodh e an uair sin a' cruinneachadh na clòimhtich bho na neadan aca: *he would then collect the down from their nests*; air sàillibh a bhàis, cha do thachair gin dhiubh sin: *because of his death, none of that happened*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: 'S ann anns a' bhliadhna seasgaidh 's a h-ochd (1968) a chaidh e a dh'fhuireach anns an Eilean Bhàn làn-thìde: *it was in 1968 that he went to live on Eilean Bàn fulltime. The use of 's ann at the beginning of this sentence gives emphasis to the naming of the year. It also provides a variety of sentence structure rather than continually starting with the substantive verb eg Chaidh e a dh'fhuireach... Remember to vary your usages and think about starting a sentence today with 's ann.*

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: Nuair a rinneadh an taigh-solais fèin-obrachail: *when the lighthouse was made automatic.*

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