

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Rìgh Seumas IV (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.macleon@bbc.co.uk. This is Litir 998. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 694 corresponds to Litir 998.

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh mu Eaglais an Eig ann an taobh sear Rois, a bh’ air an t-slighe thaisteachd, naomh eadar Galltachd na h-Alba agus Baile Dhubhthaich air a’ Ghàidhealtachd. Bha Rìgh Seumas IV air an t-slighe sin gu tric. Tha mi airson innse dhuibh mu Sheumas oir b’ esan an rìgh mu dheireadh againn aig an robh Gàidhlig.

B’ e Seumas mac Rìgh Sheumais III agus a’ bhean Mairead na Danmhairg, no Mairead Nirribhidh, oir bha an Danmhairg agus Nirribhidh ann an aonadh aig an àm. Cha robh am pòsadh uabhasach soirbheachail. Chaidh Mairead agus Seumas a-mach air a chèile gu mòr. Mu dheireadh, bha esan a’ fuireach ann an Dùn Èideann agus bha ise a’ fuireach ann an Sruighlea. Bha e math gun robh caisteal aca anns gach baile! Tha e coltach gun do rugadh Seumas òg ann an Caisteal Shruighlea – ann an ceithir cheud deug, seachdad ’s a trì (1473).

Air sgàth a’ phòsaidh, chaidh atharrachadh a dhèanamh air cruth is meud na h-Alba. ’S ann an uair sin a thàinig Arcaibh is Sealtainn fo smachd rìghrean na h-Alba mar phàirt de thochair bho Rìgh na Danmhairg.

O chionn còig ceud is trithead (530) bliadhna, ghabh Seumas òg thairis bho athair. Cha robh e ach còig bliadhn’ deug aig an àm. Bha e fhèin is athair air a dhol a-mach air a chèile cuideachd. Bha mòran de na h-uaislean, a bha an aghaidh an t-seann rìgh, a’ cur taic ri Seumas òg mar rìgh ùr.

Thàinig gnothaichean gu ceann aig Blàr Allt an t-Seilich – *the Battle of Sauchieburn* – faisg air Sruighlea. Chaidh an seann rìgh a mharbhadh. Tha aithrisean ann gun deach a mhurt an dèidh a’ bhatail. Tha aithrisean eile ann gun deach a mharbhadh nuair a chaidh a thilgeil **far eich**. Co-dhiù, bha am prionnsa òg air a chur air an rìgh-chathair mar Rìgh Seumas IV. Ach, a rèir choltais, ghabh e aithreachas airson ’s mar a thachair do athair agus mar a ghabh e fhèin gnothach ri a bhàs. Gach bliadhna aig àm a’ Charghais, bhiodh e a’ cur slabhraidh iarainn timcheall a mheadhain mar chuimhneachan air mar a ghabh e gnothach ri bàs athar.

Bha Seumas gu math comasach. Bha e tuilleadh is eòlach air a’ Bhìoball. Leugh e tòrr leabhraichean. Bha e ioma-chànanach. Thathar a’ smaoinichadh gun do dh’ionnsaich e Dànais bho a mhàthair. **Co-dhiù tha sin ceart no nach eil**, bha na cànanan a leanas aige: Laideann, Fraingis, Gearmailtis, Flànrais, Eadailtis, Spàinntis, Albais agus ... seadh ... Gàidhlig.

Tha aon rud mu dheidhinn air nach eil mi cinnteach. Tha dealbh dheth a’ sealltainn duine le stais bheag ach gun fheusag. Ach tha aithris sgrìobhte ann gun robh feusag mhòr agus falt fada aige.

Ged a bha Gàidhlig aige, chan eil sin a' ciallachadh gun robh Seumas bàigheil ris na Gàidheil a bha a' stiùireadh Tighearnas nan Eilean. Rinn e oidhirp gus a' Ghàidhealtachd a chur fo smachd làidir an rìgh.

Aig a' cheann thall, 's e a chàirdeas le Sasainn a bu dorra a bh' aige. Ged a dh'fheuch Seumas ri Alba agus Sasainn a chumail ann an sìth le chèile, dh'atharraich cùisean nuair a ghabh Eanraig VIII thairis rìgh-chathair Shasainn ann an còig ceud deug 's a naoi (1509). Tuilleadh air sin an-ath-sheachdain.

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Faclan na Litreach: Mairead na Danmhairg: *Margaret of Denmark*; pòsadh: *marriage*; Sruighlea: *Stirling*; rìgh-chathair: *throne*; slabhraidh iarainn: *iron chain*; tochair: *tocher, dowry*; Dànais: *Danish*; oidhirp: *effort*.

Abairtean na Litreach: an t-slighe thaisteach, naomh gu ruige Baile Dhubhthaich: *the sacred pilgrimage trail to Tain*; b' esan an rìgh mu dheireadh againn aig an robh Gàidhlig: *he was our last Gaelic-speaking king*; mar a tha cuid a' gabhail oirre: *as some people call her*; chaidh atharrachadh a dhèanamh air cruth na h-Alba: *the shape of Scotland was changed*; bha mòran de na h-uaislean a' cur taic ri Seumas òg mar rìgh ùr: *many of the nobles were supporting young James as a new king*; tha aithrisean ann gun deach a mhurt an dèidh a' bhatail: *there are reports that he was murdered after the battle*; àm a' Charghais: *the time of Lent*; mar chuimhneachan air mar a ghabh e gnothach ri bàs athar: *to remember how he was involved in his father's death*; bha e tuilleadh is eòlach air a' Bhìoball: *he knew the Bible well*; Laideann, Fraingis, Gearmailtis, Flànrais, Eadailtis, Spàinntis, Albais: *Latin, French, German, Flemish, Italian, Spanish, Scots*; tha aon rud mu dheidhinn air nach eil mi cinnteach: *there is one thing about him which I'm not certain of*; tha dealbh dheth a' sealltainn duine le stais bheag ach gun fheusag: *a picture of him shows a man with a small moustache but without a beard*; gun robh Seumas bàigheil ris na Gàidheil a bha a' stiùireadh Tighearnas nan Eilean: *that James was well disposed to the Gaels who were running the Lordship of the Isles*; aig a' cheann thall, 's e a chàirdeas le Sasainn a bu dorra a bh' aige: *in the end, it was his relationship with England that proved the most difficult*; ged a dh'fheuch Seumas ri Alba agus Sasainn a chumail ann an sìth le chèile: *although James tried to keep Scotland and England in peace with each other*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: nuair a chaidh a thilgeil far eich: *when he was thrown from his horse*. The third person masculine possessive article 'a' ['his'] is assumed here (it is no longer indicated in writing in front of a vowel). Thus each is in the genitive singular – because it is effectively a definite noun (one with an article). If I had written nuair a chaidh a thilgeil far each, it would mean 'when he was thrown from a horse' as the genitive would be unmarked, which is the case with an indefinite noun in modern usage.

Gnathas-cainnt na Litreach: Co-dhiù tha sin ceart no nach eil: *whether or not that is true*.

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