

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Dùghall MacIlleMhìcheil (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.maclean@bbc.co.uk. This is Litir 1,011. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 707 corresponds to Litir 1,011.

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh mu Dhùghall MacIlleMhìcheil à Lios Mòr a bha ainmeil ann an saoghal nan lus-eòlaichean anns an naoidheamh linn deug. Ann an ochd ceud deug 's a deich (1810), bha MacIlleMhìcheil na shaighdear an sàs ann an iomairt armaichte aig Breatainn airson Mauritius a ghabhail thairis bho na Frangaich. Nuair a ràinig long MhicIlleMhìcheil Mauritius – no Eilean na Frainge mar a bh' oirre aig an àm – bha cabhlach Breatannach ann mu-thrath. Bha iadsan air seòladh bho na h-Innseachan.

Nuair a ràinig e am prìomh bhaile, Port Louis, chunnaic Dùghall brataich gheala an-àirde. Bha na Frangaich air gèilleadh. Ach rinn iad sin air cumha gun gleidheadh iad lagh na Frainge agus an cànan aca. Bha rèisimeid Dhùghaill – na 72nd Highlanders – air a suidheachadh ann fad mhiosan. Ghabh Dùghall brath air a' chothrom airson sùil gheur a thoirt air dualchas nàdarraich an eilein.

Trì bliadhna an dèidh sin, **ghabh MacIlleMhìcheil fòrladh** airson a dhol gu Eilean Bourbon no mar a chanas iad ris an-diugh Réunion. Sgrìobh e tòrr mu dheidhinn nàdar an sin cuideachd. Tha aithris ann gun robh e anns a' chabhlach Bhreatannach a sheòl gu ruige Tristan da Cunha airson na h-eileanan iomallach sin a ghabhail thairis às leth Bhreatainn. Bha na Breatannaich airson dèanamh cinnteach nach biodh Frangaich a' cleachdadh Tristan da Cunha ann an oidhirp gus Napoleon Bonaparte a shaoradh bhon phrìosan ann an St Helena. Dh'fhoillsich Dùghall leabhar mu dheidhinn Tristan da Cunha: *Some Account of the Island of Tristan da Cunha and of its Natural Productions*.

Ann an ochd ceud deug is ochd-deug (1818), dh'fhàg e an t-arm agus thill e a dh'Alba. Chaidh e a dh'fhuireach anns an Apainn mu choinneimh eilean a bhreith. Bha e na thuathanach an sin. Lean e air le a chuid rannsachaidh air lusan, a' dèanamh leabhar air a bheil *Mosses of Lorn*. An uair sin, thug e sùil air algae agus chuir e seachad mòran uairean a thìde a-muigh, a' cruinneachadh stuth. Gu tric, bhiodh e a' dèanamh air a mhaicreasgop cho luath 's a ruigeadh e an taigh, gun a bhith a' cur aodach tioram air. Thathar a' smaoinneachadh gun tug sin droch bhuaidh air a shlàinte.

Ged nach robh e a' cumail gu math, chaidh e air dàna-thuras eile gu ruige Hiort. Ach, aig aois caogad 's a còig, chaochail e. Chaidh a thiodhacadh anns an t-seann chladh ri taobh Eaglais Chill Moluag ann an Lios Mòr.

Bha e ainmeil gu leòr ri a linn. Mhol Teàrlach Darwin e mar shàr-eòlaiche air saidheans nàdarraich. Bha e na dheagh charaid aig Sir Uilleam Jackson Hooker a bha na chiad stiùiriche air Gàrraidhean Kew ann an Lunnainn. Dh'ainmich Hooker grunn

lusan an dèidh MhicIlleMhìcheil, a' gabhail a-steach *Carmichaeliana* no Bealaidh Sealain Nuaidh.

Carson nach eil sinn eòlach air an-diugh? Uill, a rèir choltais bha e car diùid. Ach tha muinntir Lios Mòr eòlach air, agus tha iad moiteil às mar mhac aig an eilean a choisinn cliù dha fhèin anns an t-saoghal mhòr air an taobh a-muigh. Ge-tà, cha b' e Dùghall an t-aon duine leis a' chinneadh MacIlleMhìcheil a tha aithnichte anns an t-saoghal mhòr. Bheir sinn sùil an-ath-sheachdain air fear eile. Tha amharas agam gum bi cuid agaibh gu math eòlach air, co-dhiù ma tha sibh air sùil a thoirt air *Carmina Gadelica*.

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Faclan na Litreach: Dùghall MacIlleMhìcheil: *Dugald Carmichael*; tuathanach: *farmer*; dàna-thuras: [*adventurous*] *expedition*; Lios Mòr: *Lismore*; Hiort: *St Kilda*; Eaglais Chill Moluag: *St Moluag's Church*; Gàrraidhean Kew: *Kew Gardens*; Bealaidh Sealain Nuaidh: *New Zealand Broom*; diùid: *shy*.

Abairtean na Litreach: an sàs ann an iomairt armaichte aig na Breatannaich airson Mauritius a ghabhail thairis bho na Frangaich: *involved in an armed action by the British to take Mauritius from the French*; bha cabhlach Breatannach ann mu-thrath: *a British fleet was already there*; bha iadsan air seòladh bho na h-Innseachan: *they had sailed from India*; chunnaic X brataich gheala an-àirde: *X saw white flags raised*; bha na Frangaich air gèilleadh: *the French had surrendered*; rinn iad sin air cumha gun gleidheadh iad lagh na Frainge agus an cànan aca: *they did that on condition that they would retain the law of France and their language*; bha rèisimeid Dhùghaill air a suidheachadh ann fad mhìosan: *Dugald's regiment was established there for months*; gun robh e anns a' chabhlach Bhreatannach a sheòl gu ruige Tristan da Cunha airson na h-eileanan iomallach sin a ghabhail thairis às leth Bhreatainn: *that he was in the British fleet that sailed to take over those remote islands on behalf of Britain*; ann an oidhirp gus Napoleon Bonaparte a shaoradh bhon phrìosan: *in an effort to free Napoleon Bonaparte from prison*; chaidh e a dh'fhuireach anns an Apainn mu choinneimh eilean a bhreith: *he went to live in Appin opposite the island of his birth*; bhiodh e a' dèanamh air a mhaicreasgop cho luath 's a ruigeadh e an taigh, gun a bhith a' cur aodach tioram air: *he would make [a beeline] for his microscope as soon as he reached the house, without putting dry clothes on*; thathar a' smaoinichadh gun tug sin droch bhuaidh air a shlàinte: *it's thought that had a bad effect on his health*; mhol Teàrlach Darwin e mar shàr-eòlaiche air saidheans nàdarraich: *Charles Darwin commended him as a great scholar of natural sciences*; moiteil às mar mhac aig an eilean a choisinn cliù dha fhèin: *proud of him as a son of the island who built himself a reputation*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: *When we consider important Gaelic-speaking scientists, we shouldn't forget Dugald Carmichael of Lismore. He was a significant figure in his day, a friend of Sir William Hooker of Kew Gardens, and a correspondent with Charles Darwin. If you know anything more of his private life and his connections to Lismore, I'd love to hear from you on rmac@uags.scot.*

Gnathas-cainnt na Litreach: ghabh MacIlleMhìcheil fòrladh: *Carmichael took leave*.

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