

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Uilleam Speirs Bruce (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 1,024. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 720 corresponds to Litir 1,024.

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh an t-seachdain sa chaidh mun chiad charbad Albannach a bha riamh anns an Antartaig. An t-seachdain seo tha mi airson innse dhuibh mu fhear Albannach a tha cliùiteach airson a bhith an sàs ann an rannsachadh na h-Antartaig. B' esan Uilleam Speirs Brus, agus tha eachdraidh gu math inntinneach.

Bha athair Bhruis na Albannach ach rugadh Uilleam fhèin ann an Lunnainn, agus chaidh e gu sgoil ann an Sasainn. Aig aois fichead, ann an ochd ceud deug, ochdad 's a seachd (1887), chaidh e a dh'Alba airson cùrsaichean foghlaim a dhèanamh ann an saidheans nàdarach. Agus dh'fhuirich e ann. **Ghabh e ùidh mhòr ann an saidheans na mara.**

Ann an ochd ceud deug, naochad 's a dhà (1892), chaidh am Brusach gu ruige Na h-Eileanan Fàclannach. Bha e ann an cabhlach de cheithir soithichean a dh'fhàg Dùn Dè. Bha iad airson rannsachadh a dhèanamh air mar a ghabhadh gnìomhachas sealg nam mucan-mara a chur air dòigh anns a' Chuan a Deas. Cha robh iad soirbheachail. Cha do lorg iad mucan-mara gu leòr. Ach chòrd an t-àite gu mòr ri Brus.

'S e Comann Rìoghail a' Chruinn-eòlais a chuir ann e, agus dh'iarr Brus orra taic a thoirt dha airson triall saidheansail gu South Georgia. Ach dhiùlt iad taic a thoirt dha.

Thairis air a' gheamhradh is earrach ann an ochd ceud deug, naochad 's a còig gu sia (1895-6), bha Brus ann an àite fuar sneachdach. Ge-tà, cha robh e anns an Antartaig. Chuir e seachad an ùine sin air mullach Beinn Nibheis far an robh stèisean airson an aimsir a thomhas. An dèidh sin, bha e ann am *Franz Josef Land* anns an Artaig, far an d' fhuair e eòlas air an rannsaiche phòlach Nirribheach, Fridtjof Nansen. Chaidh rubha air fear de na h-eileanan ainmeachadh airson a' Bhruis – mar *Cape Bruce*.

An dèidh sin, bha e air ais ann an Dùn Èideann agus air cuairt-mhara eile anns an Artaig. Anns a' bhliadhna naoi ceud (1900), leig e seachad an cothrom a dhol don Antartaig mar eòlaiche-nàdair cuide ri Raibeart Scott. Bha dà adhbhar aige airson sin. Bha e airson a bhith os cionn buidheann e fhèin. Agus cha robh ùidh sam bith aige ann a bhith a' faighinn chun a' Phòla a Deas. 'S e rannsachadh saidheansail a bha fa-near dha.

Phòs e tè Seasaidh NicCoinnich, agus tha e coltach gun robh a' bhanais ann an Ros an Ear, ach chaidh iad a dh'fhuireach ann an Joppa, faisg air Dùn Èideann. Anns na bliadhnaichean sin, chuir Brus air chois Club Sgithidh na h-Alba, agus **Sutha Dhùn Èideann**.

Dhiùlt Comann Rìoghail a' Chruinn-eòlais taic airgid do Bhrus airson triall Antartaigeach a chur air dòigh. Mar sin, thog e airgead dha fhèin, ann an Alba, le tòrr dheth a' tighinn bho na bràithrean Coats, aig an robh gnìomhachas cotain. Cheannaich iad long Nirribheach agus rinn iad obair oirre gus an robh i deiseil gus seòladh chun na h-Antartaig. Chuir iad ainm ùr oirre – an Scotia. Bha iad moiteil asta fhèin gun robh gnothach uile-gu-lèir Albannach aca. Bha a h-uile duine air bòrd Albannach, agus b' e ainm oifigeil an triall *The Scottish National Antarctic Expedition*.

Dh'fhàg iad An t-Sròn san t-Samhain, naoi ceud deug 's a dhà (1902). Agus innsidh mi dhuibh mar a chaidh dhaibh an-ath-sheachdain.

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Faclan na Litreach: Uilleam Speirs Brus: *William Speirs Bruce*; saidheans nàdarrach: *natural science(s)*; Na h-Eileanan Fàclannach: *The Falkland Islands*; Comann Rìoghail a' Chruinn-eòlais: *Royal Geographical Society*; dhiùlt: *refused*; Seasaidh NicCoinnich: *Jessie Mackenzie*; triall Antartaigeach: *Antarctic expedition*; .
Abairtean na Litreach: mu fhear Albannach a tha cliùiteach airson a bhith an sàs ann an rannsachadh na h-Antartaig: *about a Scottish man who is well known for being involved in Antarctic research*; rugadh Uilleam fhèin ann an Lunnainn: *William himself was born in London*; chaidh e gu sgoil ann an Sasainn: *he went to school in England*; cabhlach de cheithir soithichean a dh'fhàg Dùn Dè: *a fleet of four ships that left Dundee*; airson rannsachadh a dhèanamh air mar a ghabhadh gnìomhachas sealg nam mucan-mara a chur air dòigh anns a' Chuan a Deas: *to research how a whaling business might be established in the Southern Ocean*; chòrd an t-àite gu mòr ri X: *X really enjoyed the place*; dh'iarr Brus orra taic a thoirt dha airson triall saidheansail: *Bruce asked them to assist him with a scientific expedition*; mullach Beinn Nibheis far an robh stèisean airson an aimsir a thomhas: *the summit of Ben Nevis where there was a station for measuring the weather*; far an d' fhuair e eòlas air an ransaiche phòlach Nirribheach: *where he got to know the Norwegian polar explorer*; leig e seachad an cothrom a dhol don Antartaig mar eòlaiche-nàdair: *he declined the opportunity to go to the Antarctic as a naturalist*; cha robh ùidh sam bith aige ann a bhith a' faighinn chun a' Phòla a Deas: *he had no interest whatsoever in getting to the South Pole*; 's e rannsachadh saidheansail a bha fa-near dha: *it's scientific research he was focused on*; chuir Brus air chois Club Sgithidh na h-Alba: *Bruce established the Scottish Ski Club*; aig an robh gnìomhachas cotain: *who had a cotton business*; dh'fhàg iad An t-Sròn san t-Samhain: *they left Troon in November*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: **Sutha Dhùn Èideann: *Edinburgh Zoo*.** *Loan words into Gaelic which start with a 'z' pose a difficulty for our native orthography, as it is not a natural sound in the modern language. The problem is solved by using a Gaelic 's'. But be aware that, in this instance, the resultant sound is halfway between a natural Gaelic 's' and the English 'z'.*

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: **Ghabh e ùidh mhòr ann an saidheans na mara: *he took a great interest in oceanography*.**

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