

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Seumas Mac a' Phearsain (2)

Each week the West Highland Free Press publishes the text for Ruairidh 's "Letter to Gaelic Learners" on BBC Radio nan Gàidheal (103.5-105 FM). Broadcasts are as follows: 10.00 pm on Sunday, following the Gaelic Learners' programme 'Beag air Bheag', with a repeat at 10.30 pm on Wednesday. This is Litir 1,038. There is also a simpler version – An Litir Bheag – which is broadcast at 4.03 pm each Sunday. Litir Bheag 734 corresponds to Litir 1,038. The Litir is also available at www.bbc.co.uk/litir and www.learnghaelic.scot/litir.

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh mun cheatharnach ainmeil, Seumas Mac a' Phearsain à Bàideanach. Bha e sa phrìosan ann an Obar Dheathain ach bha buidheann a' feuchainn ri a shaoradh. Thàinig bùidsear làidir airson stad a chur air a' ghnòthach. Thòisich e fhèin is co-ogha Sheumais, Dòmhnall Mac a' Phearsain, air sabaid le chèile.

Bha am bùidsear a' fàs lag agus dh'iarr e taic air a chù aige. Gu sgiobalta thug Dòmhnall ball-aodaich aige dheth, agus chuir e timcheall a' bhùidseir e. Thug an cù mar sin ionnsaigh air a mhaighstir fhèin, seach air Dòmhnall, agus rinn e uiread de chron air a' bhùidsear 's gum b' fheudar dha an strì a leigeil seachad.

Fhad 's a bha seo a' tachairt, bha ùghdarrasan a' bhaile air ribeanan de chlò a chur mar lìon thar a' Ghallowgate airson an rathad a dhùnadh. Ach gheàrr Dòmhnall an clò le a chlaidheamh agus fhuair Seumas a-mach gu each a bha a' feitheamh ris. Cha b' fhada gus an robh iad a' dèanamh air Bàideanach far am biodh iad sàbhailte. Bhiodh tèarmann aig Seumas ann an dùthaich nan Granddach is Clann Mhic a' Phearsain.

Latha a bha seo anns a' bhliadhna seachd ceud deug (1700) bha Seumas agus cuid de a charaidean ann am Baile Chè. Thathar ag aithris gum b' e Latha Fèill Maruibhe a bh' ann – no *St Rufus Fair* mar a chanar ann am Beurla. Bha sgioba aig MacDuibh à Braco air a thòir agus chunnaic iad an cothrom. Thug iad ionnsaigh air Seumas agus a charaidean. Thug Seumas a chlaidheamh a-mach ach thilg boireannach plaide thairis air bho uinneag gu h-àrd, agus chaidh an ceatharnach a chur an grèim.

Chaidh a chur don phrìosan ann am Banbh, cuide ri feadhainn eile dhen sgioba aige. Nochd e air beulaibh Siorram Bhanbh air an t-seachdamh latha dhen t-Samhain seachd ceud deug (1700). Nochd riochdaire aig ceann-cinnidh nan Granddach anns a' chùirt. Thuirt e gum bu chòir do Sheumas a bhith fo cheartas anns an sgìre aige fhèin, seach ann am Banbh. Ach **cha deach leis**. Chaidh diùraidh a thaghadh.

Anns a' chùis-chùirte, chualas fianais aig aon neach-fianais air fhichead. Thuirt aon fhear gum fac' e seachd duine fichead armaichte aig Seumas dà bhliadhna roimhe ann am Baile Chè agus gun robh pìobaire aig an ceann. Bha esan agus feadhainn eile a-mach air na '*h-Egyptians*' agus **gun robh cànan eile aca a bharrachd air a' Ghàidhlig**.

Bha Seumas agus fear eile, Seumas Gòrdan, air am faighinn ciontach agus chaidh binn-bhàis a chur orra. Thuirt am briteamh gur e ‘*Egyptian and vagabond*’ a bh’ ann an Seumas agus gun cailleadh e a bheatha air a’ chroich air an t-siathamh latha deug dhen t-Samhain eadar dà uair agus trì uairean feasgar. Bha an latha is uair sin air an taghadh leis gur e latha-margaidh a bh’ ann agus bhiodh sluagh mòr anns a’ bhaile. Bhiodh a’ chroich air a togail a dh’aona-ghnothach ri taobh crois na margaidh ann am meadhan Bhanbh.

Thugadh binn eadar-dhealaichte air trìùir eile – ‘*three young rogues*’. Bha an cluasan air an gearradh dhiubh, bha iad air an losgadh air an gruaidhean agus bha iad air an cuipeadh tro shràidean Baile Bhanbh. B’ e sin ‘ceartas’ aig an àm sin.

Thàinig latha a’ chrochaidh. Agus thachair rud iongantach, mar a chì sinn an-ath-sheachdain.

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Faclan na Litreach: ceatharnach: *freebooter*; Seumas Mac a’ Phearsain: *James MacPherson*; bùidsear: *butcher*; a chlaidheamh: *his sword*; teàrmann: *sanctuary*; Baile Chè: *Keith*; ceartas: *justice*.

Abairtean na Litreach: sa phrìosan ann an Obar Dheathain: *in prison in Aberdeen*; bha buidheann a’ feuchainn ri a shaoradh: *a group was trying to free him*; thòisich e fhèin is co-ogha Sheumais air sabaid le chèile: *he and James’s cousin to fight with each other*; thug X ball-aodaich aige dheth: *X took an item of clothing off*; chuir e timcheall a’ bhùidseir e: *he put it around the butcher*; thug an cù ionnsaigh air a mhaighstir fhèin, seach air X: *the dog attacked its own master, instead of X*; rinn e uiread de chron air X ’s gum b’ fheudar dha an strì a leigeil seachad: *he damaged X so much that he had to give up the struggle*; bha ùghdarrasan a’ bhaile air ribeanan de chlà a chur mar lìon thar: *the town authorities had put ribbons of material like a netting across*; a’ dèanamh air Bàideanach far am biodh iad sàbhailte: *making for Badenoch where they would be safe*; thilg boireannach plaide thairis air bho uinneag gu h-àrd: *a woman threw a blanket over him from a window above*; cuide ri feadhainn eile dhen sgioba aige: *along with some others of his crew*; air beulaibh Siorram Bhanbh: *in front of the Banff sheriff*; riochdaire aig ceann-cinnidh nan Granndach: *a representative of the clan chief of the Grants*; chaidh diùraidh a thaghadh: *a jury was chosen*; chualas fianais aig aon neach-fianais air fhichead: *evidence was heard from 21 witness*; chaidh binn-bhàis a chur orra: *they were sentenced to death*; gun cailleadh e a bheatha air a’ chroich: *that he would lose his life on the gibbet*; bhiodh sluagh mòr anns a’ bhaile: *a large amount of people would be in the town*; bhiodh a’ chroich air a togail a dh’aona-ghnothach ri taobh crois na margaidh: *the gibbet would be built deliberately beside the mercat cross*; bha iad air an losgadh air an gruaidhean: *they were burned on their cheeks*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: gun robh cànan eile aca a bharrachd air a’

Ghàidhlig: *that they spoke another language in addition to Gaelic. It’s not clear if this other language was Cant (with a strong Romany influence) or the Beurla Reagaird, a language (now known to few) which was spoken exclusively by the Highland traveller community who also spoke Gaelic.*

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: cha deach leis: *he didn’t succeed*.

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