

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Tom Eanraig

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 1,082. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 778 corresponds to Litir 1,082.

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh mun choinneimh ann an Inbhir Nis eadar Raibeart am Brusach, Rìgh na h-Alba, agus riochdairean Nirribhidh. Bha sin ann an trì cheud deug is dhà-dheug (1312). Bha an Rìgh ann airson an t-aonta eadar an dà dhùthaich – Co-chòrdadh Pheairt – a dhaingneachadh.

Mar a bha mi a’ mìnachadh, fon aonta, bha aig Alba ri sùim co-ionann ri ceud marg a chur gu Nirribhidh gach bliadhna airson na dùthchannan Lochlannach ann an Alba a thoirt seachad. Bhiodh an t-airgead air a phàigheadh air Fèill Eòin ann an Eaglais an Naoimh Mhànaidh ann am Baile na h-Eaglaise ann an Arcaibh. Ach dè thachair don aonta? **Am bi Alba fhathast a’ cur** sùim gu Nirribhidh gach bliadhna? Agus dè luach a th’ ann an ceud marg an-diugh co-dhiù?!

A rèir choltais, cha robh na h-Albannaich uabhasach dìcheallach ann a bhith a’ toirt an airgid seachad. Bha fiachan orra. Mu dheireadh thall, chaidh a chur às don dìoladh ann an ceithir cheud deug, seasgad ’s a naoi (1469), nuair a phòs a’ bhana-phrionnsa Dànach òg – Màiread – Rìgh Seumas III na h-Alba. Trì bliadhna an dèidh sin, cha robh Rìgh na Danmhairg air an tochradh a phàigheadh do Sheumas airson a’ phòsaidh. Aig an àm sin, thàinig Arcaibh is Sealtainn fo smachd na h-Alba an àite an tochruidh.

Fhuair mi a-mach mun choinneimh eadar am Brusach agus riochdairean Nirribhidh mar phàirt de rannsachadh a bha mi a’ dèanamh air Inbhir Nis agus na sgìrean mun chuairt air a’ bhaile. Am measg sin, tha Peitidh agus Àird nan Saor – sgìre gu sear air Inbhir Nis.

Mu mheadhan an naoidheamh linn deug, bha a’ Bheurla a’ faighinn làmh-an-uachdair ann am baile Àird nan Saor, no Baile nan Caimbeulach, mar a bh’ air aig an àm. Ach, anns na bailtean beaga far an robh daoine ri obair-fearainn no iasgach, ’s e Gàidhlig a bh’ aca fhathast.

Mar sin, cha bhi e na iongnadh dhuibh gun robh cleachdaidhean is cultar Gàidhealach aca. Am measg sin, bha gun robh feadhainn a’ creidsinn anns na sìthichean. Pìos beag a-mach à Àird nan Saor, tha tom beag ris an canar Tom Eanraig. Tha e air na mapaichean fhathast. Bha daoine dhen bheachd gur e àite a bh’ ann far am biodh na sìthichean a’ tighinn cruinn còmhla aig amannan, gu h-àraidh air an oidhche fo sholas na gealaich.

Timcheall air a’ bhliadhna seachd ceud deug is trithead (1730), bha fear air an robh Rothach mar ainm a’ fuireach anns an sgìre. Bha leanabh aige a bha lag is neo-chomasach. An àite a bhith a’ gabhail ris gur e dìreach droch shlàinte no tinneas a

bha a' bualadh air an leanabh, bha ar caraaid deimhinne gur e tàcharan a bh' ann. B' e sin leanabh a dh'fhàg na sìthichean an àite an naoidhein aige fhèin.

Co-dhiù, tha mi an dùil gur e Eanraig a bh' air an leanabh mar ainm – mura b' e Eanraig a bh' air athair. Bha Mgr Rothach a' creidsinn, nam fàgadh e an leanabh air a' chnoc ud thairis air an oidhche, gum biodh an leanabh ceart ann na àite sa mhadainn. Dh'fhàg e an leanabh air an tom agus chaidh e dhachaigh. Ach, nuair a thill e sa mhadainn, bha an leanabh bochd marbh. Agus sin agaibh mo sgeul, firinneach no breugach 's ged a tha e.

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Faclan na Litreach: Raibeart am Brusach: *Robert the Bruce*; Co-chòrdadh Pheairt: *The Treaty of Perth*; dìcheallach: *diligent*; Peitidh: *Petty*; Àird nan Saor: *Ardersier*.
Abairtean na Litreach: airson an t-aonta eadar an dà dhùthaich a dhaingneachadh: *to ratify the agreement between the two countries*; bha aig Alba ri sùim co-ionann ri ceud marg a chur gu Nirribhidh gach bliadhna: *Scotland had to send a sum equivalent to a hundred merks to Norway every year*; air Fèill Eòin ann an Eaglais an Naoimh Mhànais ann am Baile na h-Eaglaise ann an Arcaibh: *on St John's feast day in St Magnus's church in Kirkwall in Orkney*; dè luach a th' ann an ceud marg an-diugh?: *what is the value of a hundred merks today?*; chaidh a chur às don dìoladh: *the compensation was cancelled*; cha robh Rìgh na Danmhairg air an tochradh a phàigheadh do Sheumas: *the King of Denmark had not paid the dowry to James*; thàinig Arcaibh is Sealtainn fo smachd na h-Alba: *Orkney and Shetland came under Scottish control*; bha a' Bheurla a' faighinn làmh-an-uachdair ann am baile Àird nan Saor, no Baile nan Caimbeulach: *English was gaining the upper hand in the village of Ardersier, or Campbelltown*; far an robh daoine ri obair-fearainn no iasgach: *where the people were involved in farming or fishing*; far am biodh na sìthichean a' tighinn cruinn còmhla: *where the fairies would gather*; air an oidhche fo sholas na gealaich: *at night under moonlight*; bha ar caraaid deimhinne gur e tàcharan a bh' ann: *our friend was certain it was a changeling*; mura b' e Eanraig a bh' air athair: *if it wasn't his father that was called Henry*; nam fàgadh e an leanabh air a' chnoc ud: *if he left the baby on that hill*; nuair a thill e sa mhadainn, bha an leanabh bochd marbh: *when he returned in the morning, the poor baby was dead*; firinneach no breugach 's ged a tha e: *whether it be true or not*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: Am bi Alba fhathast a' cur sùim gu Nirribhidh gach bliadhna?: *Does Scotland still give Norway a sum every year? Do you notice that, while the English translation uses the present tense 'does', that the Gaelic version uses the future tense 'bi'. This is because the future tense in Gaelic is also used for the present habitual ie things happening regularly eg bidh mi a' dol dhan taigh-seinnse a h-uile Diciadain 'I go to the pub every Wednesday'.*

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: Mar a bha mi a' mìneachadh: *As I was explaining.*

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