

# Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

## Uamh an Fhuamhaire (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.macleon@bbc.co.uk](mailto:rodny.macleon@bbc.co.uk). This is Litir 1,162. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 858 corresponds to Litir 1,162.*

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh mu Uamh an Fhuamhaire no *Church Cave* ann an Eilean Rònaigh. Anns an t-siathamh linn deug, bha Rònaigh air a chleachdadh le spùinneadairean. Bha iad stèidhichte anns an Acarsaid Mhòir.

Bha Rònaigh riamh air aithneachadh mar eilean garbh, creagach. 'S dòcha gur e ‘eilean garbh’ a bha an t-ainm a’ ciallachadh ann an Seann Lochlannais. Tha caibeal beag – a bhuineas don cheathramh linn deug – ann an ceann a deas an eilein. Ach cha chreid mi gun robh sluagh mòr a’ fuireach ann.

Anns an ochdamh linn deug bha buachaille ann. Bha e a’ cumail sùil air crodh an uachdarain, MacLeòid Ratharsair. Chaidh cuid de Sheumasaich am falach ann an Rònaigh an dèidh Blàr Chùil Lodair. **Co-dhiù** chleachd iad Uamh an Fhuamhaire, chan urrainn dhomh a ràdh.

Mar sin, cuin a dh’èirich an sluagh chun na h-ìre ’s gum biodh eaglais a dhith orra? Uill, thachair e ri linn fuadaichean ann an Ratharsair.

Cheannaich Seòras Rèanaidh an t-eilean ann an ochd ceud deug, ceathrad ’s a trì (1843). 'S e marsantach Albannach a bh’ ann. Bha e a’ cumail thràilleann anns a’ Charibbean. Rinn e fortan. Fhuair e airgead-dìolaidh bhon riaghaltas nuair a chuir iad casg air tràilleachd anns an Ìmpireachd. 'S ann às dèidh sin a cheannaich Rèanaidh Ratharsair agus Rònaigh.

Tha droch chliù aig Rèanaidh. Chaidh aithris gun do chuir e stad air daoine bho bhith a’ pòsadh ann an Ratharsair. Dh’fhuadaich e suas ri ceud teaghlach. Anns an dàn aige, Sgreapadal, tha am bàrd ainmeil Somhairle MacGill-Eain ag ràdh:

*Rèanaidh, a thog an tuath o cheithir bailtean deug ann an Eilean nam Fear Mòra, Ratharsair Mhòr nan Leòdach.*

Am measg nam bailtean a chaidh fhuadachadh, bha Sgreapadal air taobh an ear an eilein. Seo earrann bhon dàn aig Somhairle:

*dh’fhàg Rèanaidh Sgreapadal gun daoine,  
gun taighean, gun chrodh ach caoraich,  
ach dh’fhàg e Sgreapadal bòidheach;  
ra linn cha b’ urrainn dha a chaochladh.*

Chaidh feadhainn de mhuinntir Sgreapadail gu ruige Rònaigh airson a bhith beò air an eilean chreagach sin cho math ’s a b’ urrainn dhaibh. Dh’èirich an sluagh an sin gu naoi fichead aig deireadh an naoidheamh linn deug. Seo an rann anns a bheil am bàrd ag ainmeachadh na h-uamha. Tha na ‘turraidean dubha’ rim faicinn air na bàtaichean-aiginn a bhios air an cur fo dheuchainn anns an **Lighe Rònach**.

*Fuidheall beag dhe dhaoine  
ann an Eilean nam Fear Mòra  
is turraidean dubha san linnidh  
eadar Sgreapadal 's a' Chomraich  
a' fanaid air leac Ma-ruibhe  
's air Uamha 'n Fhuamhaire 'n Rònaigh  
agus a sreathan beaga chlach,  
suidheachain fhear is bhan is cloinne  
ag èisteachd ri Maighstir Ruairi  
ag innse nach eil an seo baile mhaireas,  
Rèanaidh ann no Rèanaidh às.*

B' e Maighstir Ruairi An t-Urr. Ruairidh MacLeòid. B' esan a' chiad mhinistear aig an Eaglais Shaoir anns an Eilean Sgitheanach. Bhiodh e gu tric a' searmonachadh ann an Rònaigh ann an Uamh an Fhuamhaire.

Thogadh eaglais far an robh na daoine a' fuireach aig toiseach an fhicheadamh linn. Ach lean baistidhean airson ùine mhòr anns an uaimh. Chan eil seirbheisean gan cumail innte an-diugh. Ach tha fhios gum bi cuid de luchd-tadhail a' dèanamh ùrnaigh innte bho àm gu àm.

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**Faclan na Litreach:** Uamh an Fhuamhaire: *'the giant's cave'*; Eilean Rònaigh: *[The Isle of] Rona*; spùinneadairean: *pirates*; caibeal: *chapel*; buachaille: *herdsman*; Seòras Rèanaidh: *George Rainy*; droch chliù: *bad reputation*; bàtaichean-aiginn: *submarines*; fuidheall: *remnant*; ùrnaigh: *prayer*.

**Abairtean na Litreach:** cha chreid mi gun robh sluagh mòr a' fuireach ann: *I don't reckon a big population was living there*; crodh an uachdarain: *the cattle of the landlord*; chaidh cuid de Sheumasaich am falach: *some Jacobites hid*; cuin a dh'èirich an sluagh chun na h-ìre 's gum biodh eaglais a dhìth orra?: *when did the population rise to the level that they would need a church?*; linn fuadaichean ann an Ratharsair: *at the time of/because of clearances in Raasay*; a' cumail thràilleas: *keeping slaves*; fhuair e airgead-dìolaidh bhon riaghaltas nuair a chuir iad casg air tràilleachd: *he received money as compensation from the government when they banned slavery* dh'fhàg e Sgreapadal bòidheach, ra linn cha b' urrainn dha a chaochladh: *he left Sgreapadal beautiful, in his day he could do no else*; cho math 's a b' urrainn dhaibh: *as best they could*; Eilean nam Fear Mòra: *the island of the big men*; turraidean dubha san linnidh: *black turrents in the sound*; a' fanaid air leac Ma-ruibhe: *mocking Saint Maolrubha's flagstone*; a sreathan beaga chlach: *its little rows of stones*; suidheachain fhear is bhan is cloinne: *seats of men and woman and children*; lean baistidhean airson ùine mhòr: *baptisms continued for a long time*; chan eil seirbheisean gan cumail innte: *no services are held there*;

**Puing-chànain na Litreach:** a bhios air an cur fo dheuchainn anns an **Lighe Rònach**: *that undergo trials in the Inner Sound. English does not differentiate different parts of the Inner Sound but in Applecross the Gaelic word lighe is used for a stretch of water between two pieces of land and there are specific names for areas of the Inner Sound adjacent to Applecross – an Lighe Rònach east of Rona, an Lighe Ratharsaireach east of Raasay, an Lighe Chròlaigeach between Crowlin and Scalpay*

*and an Lìghe Aillseach between Crowlin and Loch Alsh. Charles M Robertson also tells us that the sound between Rona and Skye was (is?) known as Lìghe Phort Rìgh.*  
**Gnàthas-cainnt na Lìtreach: Co-dhiù** chleachd iad X, chan urrainn dhomh a ràdh:  
*whether [or not] they used X, I cannot say.*

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