

# Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

## A' Bhanachdach ann an 1773

*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: 2:55pm on Sunday as part of BBC Radio nan Gàidheal's hour-long learning zone, following the Gaelic Learners' programme 'SpeakGaelic Extra', with a repeat at 10.30 pm on Wednesday. This is Litir 1,205. There is also a simpler version – An Litir Bheag – which is broadcast at 2:30pm each Sunday. Litir Bheag 901 corresponds to Litir 1,205. The Litir is also available at [www.bbc.co.uk/litir](http://www.bbc.co.uk/litir) and [www.learnghaelic.scot/litir](http://www.learnghaelic.scot/litir). Ruairidh can be contacted at [fios@learnghaelic.scot](mailto:fios@learnghaelic.scot).*

Anns an latha a th' ann, tha sinn gu math cleachdte ris a' bhanachdaich. A bheil sibh eòlach air an fhacal sin – banachdach – *vaccination*? Mar as trice, bidh sinn ag ràdh 'a' bhanachdach'. Tha gu leòr againn a fhuair a' bhanachdach an aghaidh Covid-19. Agus tha deasbad air a bhith ann mu cho èifeachdach 's a tha a leithid. **Fàgaidh mi an deasbad sin an dàrna taobh** an-dràsta.

Tha mi cinnteach gum bi sibh eòlach air eachdraidh Eideird Jenner, lighiche Sasannach a rannsaich agus a leasaich a' bhanachdach an aghaidh na brice. Tha mi a' ciallachadh le sin an aghaidh a' ghalair ris an canar 'a' bhreac' – no *smallpox*. Bha an galar sin uaireigin cumanta – agus marbhtach.

Bha Jenner mothachail gun robh galar eile, nach robh marbhtach – breac a' chruidh – a' toirt dìon do dhaoine an aghaidh na brice fhèin. Bhiodh banaraich gu tric a' faighinn breac a' chruidh ach bu ghan gum biodh a' bhreac fhèin a' tighinn orra.

Ann an seachd ceud deug, naochad 's a sia (1796), thug Jenner stuth bho bhòc air craiceann tè air an robh breac a' chruidh. Chuir e sin ann an lot a rinn e air gille aois ochd bliadhna air nach robh a' bhreac riamh roimhe.

Dh'fhàs an gille rud beag tinn thairis air naoi latha ach b' e sin e. Dà mhìos an dèidh sin, rinn Jenner an aon rud air a' bhalach ach, an turas seo, le stuth bho bhòc air neach a bha a' fulang leis a' bhrìc. Cha do ghabh an gille an tinneas mòr. Bha a' bhanachdach soirbheachail.

Carson a tha mi a' beachdachadh air a' bhanachdaich an-diugh? Uill, bha mi a' leughadh mun t-sluagh ann an eilean beag ann an Alba a fhuair seòrsa de bhanachdach an aghaidh na brice còrr is fichead bliadhna mus do rinn Eideard Jenner an deuchainn aige.

Tha an cunntas a' tighinn bho thuras ainmeil air a' Ghàidhealtachd ann an seachd ceud deug, seachdad 's a trì (1773). B' e an t-eilean – Eilean nam Muc anns na h-Eileanan Tarsainn. Seo na sgrìobh an t-ùghdar mun ghnothach (tha mi ag eadar-theangachadh bhon Bheurla):

'Tha an t-uachdaran gu math cùramach do shlàinte [a phobail]. Tha an sgrìobh a bhios a' tighinn an cois na brice gu math aithnichte. Tha esan air a lagachadh gu mòr ann an Eilean nam Muc le bhith a' cur na banachdaich air ochdad de na daoine aige. Bha cosgais air de dhà thastan agus sia sgillinn an duine.' Chanainn gur e cosgais mhòr a bha sin aig an àm.

Tha an cunntas sin a' tighinn bhon Oll. Somhairle MacIain, no Samuel Johnson, am faclairiche Sasannach ainmeil a chaidh air chuairt air a' Ghàidhealtachd cuide ri Seumas Boswell. Cha do chleachd e am facal *vaccination* – a thàinig bhon obair aig Jenner. Sgrìobh e *inoculation*.

Cha chreid mi gun robh sin cho sàbhailte **ris a' bhanachdaich** a chaidh a leasachadh bhon bhrìc-chruidh. Bha e stèidhichte air stuth a fhuair eadh bho chuideigin a bh' air a bhith a' fulang leis a' bhrìc fhèin.

Innsidh mi tuilleadh bhon leabhar aig MacIain anns an ath Litir.

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**Faclan na Litreach:** lighiche: *doctor, physician*; marbhtach: *deadly, causing death*; breac a' chruidh: *cowpox*; a' toirt dìon: *protecting*; banaraich: *milking maids*; tinneas: *illness*; an t-ùghdar: *the author*; soirbheachail: *successful*; uachdaran: *landlord, laird*; faclairiche: *lexicographer*; An t-Oll. Somhairle MacIain: *Dr Samuel Johnson*.

**Abairtean na Litreach:** Anns an latha a th' ann: *these days*; tha gu leòr againn a fhuair a' bhanachdach: *plenty of us received a vaccination*; mu cho èifeachdach 's a tha a leithid: *about how effective such things are*; a rannsaich agus a leasaich a' bhanachdach an aghaidh na brìce: *who researched and developed a vaccine against smallpox*; an aghaidh a' ghalair ris an canar: *against the disease called*; bu ghann gum biodh a' bhreac fhèin a' tighinn orra: *smallpox itself would hardly ever infect them*; stuth bho bhòc air craiceann tè air an robh breac a' chruidh: *matter from a pustule on the skin of a woman who had cowpox*; rud beag tinn thairis air naoi latha ach b' e sin e: *a little sick over nine days, but that was all*; bha mi a' leughadh mun t-sluagh: *I was reading about the people*; còrr is fichead bliadhna mus do rinn Eideard Jenner an deuchainn aige: *more than twenty years before Edward Jenner conducted his experiment*; Eilean nam Muc anns na h-Eileanan Tarsainn: *the Isle of Muck in the Small Isles*; cùramach do shlàinte a phobail: *attentive to the health of the people*; dà thastan agus sia sgillinn an duine: *two shillings and sixpence a head*; chanainn gur e cosgais mhòr a bha sin aig an àm: *I'd say that was a hefty price at the time*; stèidhichte air stuth a fhuair eadh bho chuideigin: *based on material that was obtained from somebody*; a bh' air a bhith a' fulang leis a' bhrìc fhèin: *that had been suffering from smallpox itself*.

**Puing-chànain na Litreach:** cho sàbhailte **ris a' bhanachdaich**: *as safe as vaccination*. There are two feminine nouns in the Litir which traditionally slenderise in the dative singular (following a simple preposition). Even today, they are commonly slenderised because they appear as definite nouns i.e. with the article (and we are generally more conservative with definite nouns than with indefinite ones). They are a' bhanachdach which inflects thus: leis a' bhanachdaich, air a' bhanachdaich; and a' bhreac which inflects as follows: leis a' bhrìc, air a' bhrìc.

**Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach:** Fàgaidh mi an deasbad sin an dàrna taobh: *I'll leave that debate to one side*.

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