

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Bàs Alasdair III

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 1,269. There is also a simpler version – An Litir Bheag – which is broadcast at 2:30pm each Sunday. Litir Bheag 965 corresponds to Litir 1,269. The Litir is also available at www.bbc.co.uk/litir and [www.learnGaelic.scot/litir](http://www.learn Gaelic.scot/litir). Ruairidh can be contacted at fios@learnGaelic.scot.

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh mu Cho-chòrdadh Pheairt. Fhuair Alba a cumadh a th' oirre an-diugh – ach a-mhàin Arcaibh is Sealtainn. Thachair sin còrr is seachd ceud gu leth bliadhna air ais. An-diugh tha mi a' dol a thoirt an t-sreatha Litrichean seo gu ceann. Tha mi a' dol a dh'innse dhuibh mun chòrr de bheatha Alasdair III, Rìgh na h-Alba, agus mun dìleib a dh'fhàg e.

Bha triùir chloinne aig Alasdair. Bha nighean aige – Mairead – a rugadh ann an dà cheud deug, seasgad 's a h-aon (1261). An uair sin bha **dithis bhalach** aige. Rugadh Alasdair ann an dà cheud deug, seasgad 's a ceithir (1264). Agus rugadh Daibhidh ochd bliadhna an dèidh sin. Ge-tà, mar a chì sinn, cha do shuidh duine aca air an rìgh-chathair.

Ann an dà cheud deug, seachdad 's a còig (1275), chaochail bean Alasdair, air an robh Mairead cuideachd. Bha i a' fulang le tinneas no galar air choreigin. Bha a h-athair, Eanraig III Shasainn, air bàsachadh trì bliadhna roimhe. Agus bha a bràthair, Eideard I, a-nise na rìgh ann an Sasainn. Bhiodh esan ainmeil, tro thìde, mar fhear a dh'fheuchadh ri Alba a chur fo smachd Shasainn. Agus bha e air a chuideachadh le bàs na cloinne gu lèir aig Alasdair III fhad 's a bha esan fhathast na rìgh.

Chaochail Daibhidh an toiseach, ann an dà cheud deug, ochdad 's a h-aon (1281) ann an Caisteal Shruighlea. Bha e dìreach ochd bliadhn' a dh'aois.

Chaochail Mairead ann an dà cheud deug, ochdad 's a trì (1283). Bha i air Rìgh Nirribhidh, Erik (mac Mhànais, ogha Hákon), a phòsadh. Bha i a' fuireach ann an Nirribhidh. Bha aon nighean aca – Mairead (eile!). Ach chaochail màthair na h-ìghne aig àm na breithe no goirid an dèidh sin. Bha Mairead òg na bana-phrionnsa aig Alba. Ge-tà, a rèir lagh Nirribhidh, cha bhiodh cead aig boireannach suidhe air rìgh-chathair na dùthcha sin.

Cha robh air fhàgail beò de chloinn Rìgh na h-Alba ach Alasdair, a mhac a bu shine. Ach chaochail esan cuideachd, **bliadhna an dèidh a pheathar**. Bha e dìreach fichead bliadhna a dh'aois.

Bha Alasdair III dìreach anns na ceathradan. Bha e slàn, fallain agus bha ban-ogha aige ann an Nirribhidh – Mairead, 'Maighdean Nirribhidh'. A dh'aindeoin sin, thàinig impidh air bean ùr òg a lorg, gus am biodh prionnsa no bana-phrionnsa aig Alba. Phòs e tè de dh'uaislean na Frainge – Yolande de Dreux – air Latha na Samhna dà cheud deug, ochdad 's a còig (1285).

Ach gu mì-fhortanach, dìreach còig mìosan an dèidh sin, thuit an Rìgh far an eich aige. Bha e a' marcachd a dh'ionnsaigh Kinghorn ann am Fìobh airson a bhean fhaicinn. Bha e leis fhèin ann an dorchadas na h-oidhche. Bhris e amhaich.

Bha Yolande trom le leanabh ach cha do mhair an leatromachd. B' i Mairead 'Maighdean Nirribhidh' a-nise oighre do Chrùn na h-Alba. Bha i ro òg airson Nirribhidh fhàgail. Ceithir bliadhna an dèidh sin, chaidh i thar a' chuain ach chaochail i air an t-slighe.

Bha Alba às aonais rìgh no banrìgh no oighre don Chrùn. An dèidh rìoghachadh comasach an Dàrna agus Treas Alasdair, bha làithean dorcha agus cogaidhean na neo-eisimeileachd air fàire.

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Faclan na Litreach: triùir chloinne: *three children*; rugadh: *was born*; Eanraig III Shasainn: *Henry III of England*; Eideard: *Edward*; Caisteal Shruighlea: *Stirling Castle*; ogha: *grandchild*; Latha na Samhna: *1st of November*; às aonais: *without*.

Abairtean na Litreach: Fhuair Alba a cumadh a th' oirre an-diugh – ach a-mhàin Arcaibh is Sealtainn: *Scotland achieved the shape [extent] it has today – with the exception of Orkney and Shetland*; còrr is seachd ceud gu leth bliadhna air ais: *more than 750 years ago*; mun dileib a dh'fhàg e: *about the legacy he left*; cha do shuidh duine aca air an rìgh-chathair: *none of them sat on the throne*; air an robh Mairead cuideachd: *who was also called Margaret*; a dh'fheuchadh ri Alba a chur fo smachd Shasainn: *who would try to put Scotland under the control of England*; bàs na cloinne gu lèir: *the death of all the children*; chaochail màthair na h-ìghne aig àm na breithe no goirid an dèidh sin: *the girl's mother died at the time of the birth or shortly after that*; a mhac a bu shine: *his eldest son*; dìreach anns na ceathradan: *only in [his] forties*; a dh'aindeoin sin, thàinig impidh air bean ùr òg a lorg: *despite that, pressure came on him to find a new young wife*; thuit an Rìgh far an eich aige: *the King fell from his horse*; cha do mhair an leatromachd: *the pregnancy did not last*; oighre do Chrùn na h-Alba: *heir to the Scottish Crown*; thar a' chuain: *across the ocean*; chaochail i air an t-slighe: *she died on the journey*; an dèidh rìoghachadh comasach an Dàrna agus Treas Alasdair: *after the competent reign[s] of Alasdair II and Alasdair III*; bha làithean dorcha agus cogaidhean na neo-eisimeileachd air fàire: *dark days and the wars of independence were lying in wait*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: chaochail esan cuideachd, **bliadhna an dèidh a pheathar**: *he also died, a year after his sister*. Peathar is the genitive form (in many dialects) of piuthar 'sister'. It is here in the genitive because it is commanded by the compound preposition an dèidh. It is lenited because of a 'his', the masculine third person singular possessive pronoun, which incurs lenition (the feminine does not).

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: bha dithis bhalach aige: *he had two sons*.

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