

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

‘Sarah’ agus an Dà-shealladh (1)

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 1,272. There is also a simpler version – An Litir Bheag – which is broadcast at 2:30pm each Sunday. Litir Bheag 968 corresponds to Litir 1,272. The Litir is also available at www.bbc.co.uk/litir and www.learnghaelic.scot/litir. Ruairidh can be contacted at fios@learnghaelic.scot.

There lived on fair Loch Rannoch-side, In slated cottage neat and bright, A woman famous far and wide, For gift of second-sight.

’S ann mar sin a tha dàna a’ tòiseachadh, a tha a’ dèanamh tuairisgeul de bhoireannach a bha a’ fuireach ann an Cille Chonain air cladach a tuath Loch Raineach. Bha an dà shealladh aice. B’ e ùghdar an dàin an t-Urramach Iain Mac na Ceardaich, ministear na paraiste ann an Ceann Loch Raineach. Dh’fhoillsich e an dàna anns an leabhar *Schiehallion* a chaidh fhoillseachadh ann an naoi ceud deug ’s a còig (1905).

Tha am ministear a’ mìneachadh a’ ghnòthaich ann an ro-ràdh don dàna fiontial *‘The Second Sight: A Rannoch Mystery’*. ’S e ‘Sarah’ a ghabh an t-ùghdar air an t-seann bhoireannach mar ainm ged a tha mi a’ tuigsinn gum b’ e a fìor ainm ‘Raghnaid Chamshron’. Bha i a’ fuireach air croit faisg air Cille Chonain. Bhuineadh i do sgìre Raineach agus ’s e Nic Ghriogair a bh’ oirre mus do phòs i.

Sgaoil a cliù fad is farsaing. Ghabh Marcas Bhòid ùidh innte. Bha esan an sàs ann am buidheann ann an Lunnainn ris an cainte an *Psychical Research Society*. Sgrìobh fear de choimiseanairean na buidhne don mhinistear ann an Ceann Loch Raineach, ag iarraidh a thaic. Agus chaidh coimiseanair a Raineach airson agallamh a dhèanamh le Sarah air a’ chòigeamh latha fichead dhen Ògmhios, ochd ceud deug, naochad ’s a còig (1895).

Bha còmhradh inntinneach aca an toiseach. Thuirt an coimiseanair gun robh Marcas Bhòid gu math cràbhach agus gun robh e a’ miannachadh a bhith a’ tuigsinn nan sgrìobtaran. Dh’aontaich Sarah ris. Thuirt i, ‘Tha mi dhen aon bheachd ris a’ Mharcas an sin. Tha mi a’ smaoinichadh gu bheil am Bìoball làn dhen dà-shealladh; agus nam chùis fhèin, saoilidh mi gu bheil an gibht gu math tric na taic airson cuid de rudan anns a’ Bhìoball a thuigsinn.’

Bha am ministear **anns an èisteachd** fhad ’s a bha Sarah a’ bruidhinn ris a’ choimiseanair. An dèidh làimhe, rinn e nàdar de chlàr air na thuirt i ann an riochd bàrdachd Beurla. Tha mi an dùil gun robh Sarah dà-chànanach. Seo cuid de na puingean a dh’èirich às a’ chòmhradh.

Bha Sarah pòsta agus bha teaghlach mòr aice. Dh’aidich i gun robh cuid de mhuintir an àite a’ gabhail eagal ron dà-shealladh aice.

Tha cladh ann an Cille Chonain – mar a bhiodh dùil bho ainm a’ bhaile. Gu tric, bhiodh Sarah a’ faicinn taibhs anns a’ chladh. Bhiodh i a’ faicinn daoine – ann an riochd thaibhsean – air an tiodhlacadh. Agus bhiodh i a’ cluinntinn fuaimnean piocaid no spaid ga h-obrachadh anns a’ chladh – agus saor a’ dèanamh chisteachan-laighe.

Chan ann a-mhàin ann an sgìre Raineach a bha a tàlant an feumail. Chaidh fear a bhàthadh ann an Loch Obha ann an Earra-Ghàidheal a tha pìos mòr air falbh bho Raineach. Dh’fheuch sguad de dhaoine ri a chorp a lorg. Rinn iad **a h-uile càil a b’ urrainn dhaibh**.

Aig a’ cheann thall, chuir iad litir gu Sarah mun chùis. Air an dearbh latha a fhuair i an litir, rinn Sarah sgeidse de Loch Obha. Chomharraich i an t-àite far am faigheadh iad lorg air a chorp. Nuair a chaidh daoine ann, bha a chorp dìreach far an tuirt a’ bhan-fhàidh a bhitheadh e.

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Faclan na Litreach: ro-ràdh: *foreword*; Raghnaid Chamshron: *Rachel Cameron*; Marcas Bhòid: *The Marquis of Bute*; cràbhach: *religious, devout*; sguad: *squad*; sgeidse: *sketch*.

Abairtean na Litreach: ‘S ann mar sin a tha dàn a’ tòiseachadh: *that’s how a poem starts*; a bha a’ fuireach ann an Cille Chonain air cladach a tuath Loch Raineach: *who was living in Killichonan on the north shore of Loch Rannoch*; bha an dà shealladh aice: *she had the second sight [lit. the two sights]*; b’ e ùghdar an dàin an t-Urramach Iain Mac na Ceàrdaich: *the poem’s author was the Rev. John Sinclair*; ministear na paraiste ann an Ceann Loch Raineach: *the parish minister in Kinloch Rannoch*; ‘s e Nic Ghriogair a bh’ oirre mus do phòs i: *she was named MacGregor before she married*; sgaoil a cliù fad is farsaing: *her reputation spread far and wide*; buidheann ann an Lunnainn ris an cainte: *a group in London called*; chaidh coimiseanair a Raineach airson agallamh a dhèanamh: *a commissioner went to Rannoch to conduct an interview*; gun robh e a’ miannachadh a bhith a’ tuigsinn nan sgrìobtaran: *that he was desirous of understanding the scriptures*; gu bheil an gibht gu math tric na taic airson cuid de rudan anns a’ Bhioball a thuigsinn: *that the gift in many instances is a great help to a better understanding of lots of things that are in the Bible*; a’ gabhail eagail ron dà-shealladh aice: *fearful of her second-sight*; a’ faicinn taibhs anns a’ chladh: *seeing a ghost in the cemetery*; fuaimnean piocaid no spaid ga h-obrachadh anns a’ chladh: *the noises of a pick or spade being used in the cemetery*; chan ann a-mhàin ann an sgìre Raineach a bha a tàlant an feumail: *it wasn’t just in Rannoch that her talents were useful*; chaidh fear a bhàthadh ann an Loch Obha ann an Earra-Ghàidheal: *a man was drowned in Loch Awe in Argyll*; bha a chorp dìreach far an tuirt a’ bhan-fhàidh a bhitheadh e: *his body was exactly where the [female] seer said it would be*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: Rinn iad **a h-uile càil a b’ urrainn dhaibh**. *They did everything they could*. I might also have said Rinn iad na b’ urrainn dhaibh – *this would mean the same*. You might also hear Rinn mi na b’ urrainn or Rinn mi na b’ urrainn mi ‘I did what I could’ as the preposition *do/dha* is not used with *urrainn* in all dialects.

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: Bha am ministear **anns an èisteachd**: *the minister was listening in/in the audience*.

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