

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

*A special programme, in the form of a “letter”, written and compiled by Roddy Maclean, and specifically aimed at 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, Roddy can be contacted at rodny.maclean@bbc.co.uk * This is Litir 354. Note that Roddy also broadcasts a simplified version – An Litir Bheag – on Monday evenings at 7.00 pm. This is also available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 50 corresponds to Litir 354.*

Ann an dà Litir mu dheireadh, bha mi a’ toirt sùil air eisimpleirean bhon leabhar *The Gaelic Etymology of the Languages of Western Europe* le Teàrlach MacAoidh. Ach cò e an duine a sgrìobh an leabhar? Agus an robh Gàidhlig aige? Uill, cha robh. Ach bha mòran chànanan eile aige. Agus bha e Albannach.

Rugadh e ann am Peairt ann an ochd ceud deug is dhà-dheug (1812) no ’s dòcha ochd ceud deug is ceithir-deug (1814). **Chaochail a mhàthair** nuair a bha Teàrlach glè òg, agus ’s e athair a thog e. Bha esan na stiùiriche còmhlan-ciùil anns an rèisimeid ris an canar an *Royal Artillery*. Bha e a’ fuireach thall thairis ach thill e a dh’Alba nuair a ghabh e malaria. Bha e beò an uair sin air peinnsean nach robh uabhasach luachmhor.

Fhuair Teàrlach a chuid foghlaim an toiseach ann an Lunnainn is an uair sin anns a’ Bhrùiseal, far an deach athair a dh’fhuireach. Ann an sin, dh’ionnsaich an gille Fraingis, Gearmailtis, Eadailtis is Spàinntis. ’S e bràthair a sheanar, am Màidshear-Seanalair Raibeart MacAoidh, a bha a’ pàigheadh airson a chuid foghlaim. Agus bha esan a’ tuigsinn gum biodh Teàrlach a’ dol do na h-Innseachan mar shaighdear. Ach cha deach am plana sin air adhart. Chaidh athair Theàrlach agus uncail a-mach air a chèile.

Fhuair Teàrlach obair mar neach-naidheachd ann an Lunnainn – an toiseach leis an *Sun* agus an uair sin leis a’ *Morning Chronicle* – am pàipear a bu mhotha a bha a’ strì le Tìm Lunnainn airson prìomhachas. Am measg na bha ag obair don *Chronicle* aig an àm, bha Uilleam Thackeray agus Teàrlach Dickens.

Fhuair MacAoidh obair mar Fo-dheasaiche. Ach a dh’aindeoin ’s gu robh e trang, ag obair sia latha san t-seachdain, fhuair e ùine airson bàrdachd is leabhraichean a sgrìobhadh. Mus robh e trithead bliadhna a dh’aois, bha e air na leabhraichean a leanas a sgrìobhadh: *A History of London, The Thames and its Tributaries*, nobhail air an robh *Longbeard, Lord of London*, agus cruinneachadh de dh’aistidhean air an robh *Memoirs of Extraordinary Popular Delusions, and the Madness of Crowds*.

Ann an ochd ceud deug ceathrad ’s a ceithir (1844), fhuair MacAoidh obair ùr – air ais ann an Alba – mar Dheasaiche Argus Ghlaschu. Anns a’ bhaile sin, bha e an sàs gu mòr le daoine aig an robh beachdan libearalach. **Chaidh ceum LLD a bhuileachadh air** le Oilthigh Ghlaschu. Agus phòs e ann an Glaschu – tè Rose Henrietta Vale.

Às dèidh trì bliadhna ann an Glaschu, thill e a Lunnainn far an d’ fhuair e obair anns an *Illustrated London News*. Nuair a bha e ag obair don phàipear sin, dh’fhoillsich e

ann feadhainn de na h-òrain a sgrìobh e. Airson sin bha e ag obair còmhla ris a' chruthadair-chiùil ainmeil, Sir Eanraig Bishop.

'S e bliadhna dhòrainneach a bh' ann dha ann an ochd ceud deug, caogad 's a naoi (1859). Dh'fhàg e an *Illustrated London News* airson pàipear-naidheachd ùr a chur air chois – an *London Review* – nach do shoirbhich. Agus **chaochail a' bhean aige**. Dà bhliadhna às dèidh sin phòs e Màiri Ealasaid Mills.

Nise, bidh sibh a' mothachadh nach do dh'aithris mi dad mun Ghàidhlig fhathast. 'S e as coireach ri sin nach eil dad ri aithris fhathast. Gu dearbh, feumaidh sinn feitheamh chun na h-ath-sheachdain airson sin. Cha do ràinig sinn ach ochd ceud deug, seasgad 's a dhà (1862), nuair a chaidh MacAoidh a dh'Ameireagaidh airson aithrisean a dhèanamh air a' Chogadh Chatharra. Agus bhris e naidheachd mhòr fhad 's a bha e thall – air an toir sinn sùil anns an ath Litir.

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Faclan na Litreach: eisimpleirean: *examples*; Teàrlach MacAoidh: *Charles Mackay*; fo-dheasaiche: *sub-editor*; cogadh catharra: *civil war*.

Abairtean na Litreach: 's e athair a thog e: *it [was] his father who raised him*; bha esan na stiùiriche còmhlan-ciùil anns an rèisimeid ris an canar: *he was a bandleader in the regiment known as*; peinnsean nach robh uabhasach luachmhor: *a pension which was not very valuable*; anns a' Bhruiseal, far an deach athair a dh'fhuireach: *in Brussels, where his father went to live*; gum biodh Teàrlach a' dol do na h-Innseachan mar shaighdear: *that Charles would be going to India as a soldier*; chaidh athair Theàrlaich agus uncail a-mach air a chèile: *Charles's father and his [father's] uncle fell out with each other*; am pàipear a bu mhotha a bha a' strì le Tìm Lunnainn airson prìomhachas: *the paper which was most strongly competing with the Times of London for the top spot*; a dh'aindeoin 's gu robh e trang: *despite the fact that he was busy*; dh'fhoillsich e ann feadhainn de na h-òrain a sgrìobh e: *he published in it some of the songs he wrote*; còmhla ris a' chruthadair-chiùil: *with the composer*; bliadhna dhòrainneach: *an anguished year*; nach do shoirbhich: *which did not succeed*; nach eil dad ri aithris fhathast: *there is nothing to report yet*; bhris e naidheachd mhòr: *he broke big news*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: **Chaochail a mhàthair/chaochail a' bhean aige:** *his mother/wife died. There are several euphemisms in Gaelic for saying someone has died. In much of the Gàidhealtachd, particularly in northern parts of the mainland, it is considered ill-mannered to say bhàsaich in relation to a person (although this is standard speech in Lewis). So it would be said: bhàsaich a' bhò (the cow died) but chaochail Pàdraig (Peter died). Chaochail e literally means "he changed" and would refer to a "natural" death or, at least, not to one involving obvious outside intervention. If somebody is killed in an explosion, for example, we would be more likely to say chaidh X a mharbhadh ann an spreadhadh, although if somebody were injured in an explosion but died three days later in hospital, we would probably say chaochail X san ospadal trì latha às dèidh dha a bhith air a leòn ann an spreadhadh.*

Gnàths-cainnt na Litreach: **Chaidh ceum a bhuileachadh air:** a degree was bestowed upon him.

* Tha "Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh" air a maoineachadh le Seirbheis nam Meadhanan Gàidhlig.

