

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

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 roddy.maclean@bbc.co.uk. This is Litir 508. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 204 corresponds to Litir 508.

Bha mi a’ leughadh leabhar gu math taitneach o chionn ghoirid. ’S e an t-ainm a th’ air *Thugam agus Bhuam*. ’S e cruinneachadh de sgeulachdan is òrain a th’ ann, agus iad uile air an aithris no air an cruthachadh le Pàdruiig Moireasdan nach maireann. ’S e Dòmhnall Eàirdsidh Dòmhnallach nach maireann a thagh agus a dheasaich na sgeulachdan. Bha Dòmhnall Eàirdsidh ag obair fad ùine mhòr aig Sgoil Eòlais na h-Alba. Bha esan am measg nan daoine a chlàir Pàdruiig Moireasdan, agus e ag aithris sgeulachdan. Thàinig an leabhar a-mach an toiseach o chionn trithead ’s a dhà bliadhna. Ach **chuir** Comann Coimhearsnachd Ghriomasaigh **ann an clò a-rithist** e o chionn ghoirid. Mo bheannachd orra.

Rugadh Pàdruiig Moireasdan – Pàdruiig mac ’illeasb’ ’ic Phàdruiig ’ic Iain – ann an Griomasaigh ann an ochd ceud deug, ochdad ’s a naoi (1889). Mura h-eil sibh eòlach air Griomasaigh, ’s e eilean beag a th’ ann eadar Uibhist a Tuath agus Beinn a’ Bhadhla. Nuair a thogadh Pàdruiig ann, bha a’ choimhearsnachd gu math traidiseanta. Bha daoine math gus sgeulachdan innse, agus bha an taigh-ceilidh fhathast a’ dol. ’S iomadh taigh anns am biodh daoine a’ tighinn cruinn còmhla air an oidhche. Agus bhiodh sgeulachdan, naidheachdan is **dibhearsain** gu leòr a’ dol.

Nuair a bha Pàdruiig na dheugaire dh’ fhalbh e taobh Abhainn Chluaidh, far an robh e ag obair ann an Guireag is Glaschu. Bha e na sheòladair fad greis. Chuir e seachad Cogadh a’ Cheusair ann an rèisimeid Mhic Shimidh agus thill e an uair sin a Ghriomasaigh. Bha e ri iasgach is obair na croite ann an Griomasaigh. Airson a’ chòrr de a bheatha bha e eadar a’ Ghalltachd, Griomasaigh agus Eilean Heisgeir. Faodaidh sibh eachdraidh a bheatha a leughadh le bhith a’ ceannach an leabhair.

Ach tha mi airson innse dhuibh mu aon de na stòiridhean aig Pàdruiig a nochdas anns an leabhar. Chan e sgeulachd a chuala e anns an taigh-chèilidh ach tachartas na bheatha fhèin, nuair a bha e òg. Bha sin ann an naoi ceud deug ’s a h-aon-deug (1911). Bhà Pàdraig an làthair nuair a thachair rudeigin iongantach. ’S e latha mòr a bh’ ann.

’S ann am Beal Feirste a thachair e agus bha Pàdruiig ann a chionn ’s gun robh e ag obair air tè de bhàtaichean Ghlaschu aig an àm, a’ toirt bathar eadar Alba is Èirinn. A bheil fios agaibh dè bh’ ann? Bha Pàdraig an làthair nuair a chaidh an Titanic a chur air bhog ann am Beal Feirste.

Air an latha mu dheireadh dhen Chèitean naoi ceud deug ’s a h-aon-deug (1911) bhathar a’ dèanamh deiseil airson an soitheach as motha a chaidh a thogail riamh a chur air bhog. Cha robh i deiseil airson luchd-turais a ghiùlain. Bha tòrr ri dhèanamh oirre fhathast. Ach bha a slige deiseil airson a dhol air bhog.

Chaidh còrr is fichead tonna de gheir a chur air an t-slip airson leigeil leis an t-slige sleamhnadh sìos don abhainn. Bha sgioba de luchd-obrach deiseil airson am fiodh a bha ga cumail na h-àite a thoirt air falbh. Bha a h-uile càil an ìre mhath ceart gu leòr.

Ach dh'fhairich Pàdruig rudeigin neònach air an latha sin. Beagan is bliadhna às dèidh sin, tha mi cinnteach gun do thill na thachair do chuimhne nuair a chaidh an Titanic don aiginn anns a' chuan mhòr. An ath-sheachdain, leigidh mi le Pàdruig innse dhuibh beagan na fhaclan fhèin air dè dìreach a thachair air an latha ainmeil sin ann am Beal Feirste.

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Faclan na Litreach: taitneach: *pleasant*; Dòmhnall Eàirdsidh Dòmhnallach: *Donald Archie MacDonald*; Sgoil Eòlais na h-Alba: *School of Scottish Studies*; traidiseanta: *traditional*; deugaire: *teenager*; Guireag: *Gourock*.

Abairtean na Litreach: sgeulachdan is òrain: *stories and songs*; air an aithris no air an cruthachadh le Pàdruig Moireasdan: *recounted or created by Peter Morrison*; nach maireann: *deceased*; mo bheannachd orra: *well done to them*; eadar Uibhist a Tuath agus Beinn a' Bhadhla: *between North Uist and Benbecula*; dh'fhalbh e taobh Abhainn Chluaidh: *he went off to the Clyde*; chuir e seachad Cogadh a' Cheusair ann an rèisimeid Mhic Shimidh: *he spent the First World War in the Lovat Scouts*; airson a' chòrr de a bheatha: *for the rest of his life*; 's ann am Beal Feirste a thachair e: *it's in Belfast it happened*; a' toirt bathar: *taking goods*; nuair a chaidh an Titanic a chur air bhog: *when the Titanic was launched*; an soitheach as motha a chaidh a thogail riamh: *the largest vessel ever built*; deiseil airson luchd-turais a ghiùlain: *ready to carry passengers*; bha a slige deiseil: *her hull was ready*; chaidh còrr is fichead tonna de gheir a chur air an t-slip: *more than 20 tons of tallow were put on the slipway*; sleamhnadh sìos don abhainn: *sliding down to the river*; dh'fhairich Pàdruig rudeigin neònach: *Peter heard/sensed a strange thing*; gun do thill na thachair do chuimhne: *that what happened returned to his memory*; don aiginn anns a' chuan mhòr: *to the abyss in the ocean*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: bhiodh sgeulachdan, naidheachdan is **dibhearsain** gu leòr a' dol: *there would be plenty of stories, anecdotes and fun happening. Isn't it interesting how a loanword from another language can take on a new life in its adopted tongue. Or sometimes the word retains a meaning that was present in the donor language when the word passed over, but which has become weaker in the donor language. An example is dibhearsain which derives from the English "diversion". In Gaelic the primary meaning of the word is "fun, entertainment" which is no longer the primary meaning of the word in English. Spòrs is another – it came from the English "sport". While both words mean "a physical activity, often competitive", the secondary meaning of "fun, good-humoured joking" is now stronger in Gaelic than in the donor language. If somebody objects to you making fun of them you can say, "Bha mi dìreach a' gabhail spòrs."*

Gnathas-cainnt na Litreach: **chuir** Comann Coimhearsnachd Ghriomasaigh ann an clò a-rithist e: *Grimsay Community Association reprinted/republished it*.

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