

# Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

## **Diorbhail, Baintighearna Ghall-Ghàidhealaibh**

*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 [rodny.macleon@bbc.co.uk](mailto:rodny.macleon@bbc.co.uk). This is Litir 733. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 429 corresponds to Litir 733.*

Bliadhna no dhà air ais, fhuair mi post-d bho dhuine as aithne dhomh ann an Sasainn. Tha fìor dheagh Ghàidhlig aige. Sgrìobh e gun robh e dìreach air a bhith ann an Àth nan Damh. Mhèdraich mi greis air an ainm-àite. Àth nan Damh. An uair sin, thàinig e thugam – ‘the ford of the oxen’ no Oxford. Uill, tha mi a’ fàs cleachdte ris an ainm, mean air mhean. Cha chreid mi, ge-tà, gum biodh Drochaid Cham a’ dèanamh a’ ghnòthaich cho math airson ‘Cambridge’!

Co-dhiù, tha ceist agam dhuibh. Dè an ceangal a th’ ann eadar a’ Ghàidhlig, seann abaid ann an ceann a deas na h-Alba, colaiste oilthigh ann an Àth nan Damh, agus fear a bha na Rìgh Albannach airson ceithir bliadhna? Na gabhaibh dragh – tha sibh fhathast ag èisteachd ri *Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh*, seach *Round Britain Quiz* ann an Gàidhlig! Bheir mi am fuasgladh dhuibh – *Diorbhail*. Boireannach air an robh Diorbhail mar ainm.

B’ e Diorbhail Baintighearna Ghall-Ghàidhealaibh anns an treas linn deug. Ann am Beurla, ’s e Devorgilla an t-ainm a bh’ oirre. Ach ’s e sin dreach Laidinn air an ainm Ghàidhlig *Dearbhforghaill*. Tha mi an dùil gur e Diorbhail an dreach Gàidhlig a th’ againn air an ainm sin anns an latha an-diugh.

Bha Diorbhail na nighinn aig Ailean, Tighearna Ghall-Ghàidhealaibh. Bha mi a’ bruidhinn ri fear-eachdraidh anns an sgìre sin an-uiridh, agus dh’inns esan dhomh gum biodh Gàidhlig gu cinnteach aig Diorbhail agus a h-athair. Nuair a bha i trì bliadhna deug a dh’aois, phòs i Iain, còigeamh baran Bhalliol, aig an robh fearann mòr ann an ceann a tuath Shasainn. Bha Iain na chomhairleach aig Rìgh Shasainn.

Ann an dà cheud deug, seasgad ’s a trì (1263), bha Balliol an sàs ann an connspaid mu fhearann le Easbaig Dhurham. Chaidh a’ chùis an aghaidh Bhalliol agus chaidh iarraidh air, mar pheanas, colaiste a stèidheachadh ann an Oilthigh Àth nan Damh airson nan daoine bochda. Còig bliadhna an dèidh sin, chaochail Balliol. Ach lean a bhantrach, Diorbhail, le bhith a’ cur airgead ris a’ cholaiste airson ’s gum biodh i seasmhach. Tha Balliol College ann chun an latha an-diugh.

Ach dè mu dheidhinn na seann abaid agus an Rìgh Albannach? Uill, ann an dà cheud deug, seachdad ’s a trì (1273), stèidhich Diorbhail abaid mar chuimhneachan air an duine aice. Bhon a chaochail e, bha ise air a bhith a’ giùlan a chridhe **spìosraichte** cuide rithe fad na h-ùine. Bha e ann an ciste bheag ìbhri.

Nuair a chaochail ise ann an dà cheud deug is naochad (1290), bha a’ chiste air a tiodhlacadh ri a taobh. Mar chomharra air a’ ghaol a bh’ aice air an duine aic’, ghabh na manaich *Dulce Cor* no ‘Sweetheart’ air an abaid. *Sweetheart Abbey*. ’S e togalach

drùidhteach a th' ann a dh'fhuiling an dèidh an Ath-leasachaidh. Ach tha e brèagha mar thobhta.

Cha robh Diorbhail beò fada gu leòr airson faicinn mar a chaidh inbhe Rìgh na h-Alba a bhuileachadh air a' ghille aice, Iain. Bha e na Rìgh airson faisg air ceithir bliadhna ach aig droch àm nuair a bha Rìgh Eideard Shasainn a' feuchainn ri smachd a ghabhail air Alba. Ach, mar a thuirt am fear mòr, 's e sgeulachd airson latha eile a tha sin. Beannachd leibh.

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**Faclan na Litreach:** post-d: *email*; Àth nan Damh: *Oxford*; abaid: *abbey*; manaich: *monks*.

**Abairtean na Litreach:** Bliadhna no dhà air ais: *a year or two back*; bho dhuine as aithne dhomh ann an Sasainn: *from a man I know in England*; mheòraich mi greis: *I considered for a while*; a' fàs cleachdte ris an ainm, mean air mhean: *slowly getting used to the name*; Baintighearna Ghall-Ghàidhealaibh: *Lady of Galloway*; Tighearna Ghall-Ghàidhealaibh: *Lord of Galloway*; bha Iain na chomhairleach aig Rìgh Shasainn: *John was an adviser to the King of England*; an sàs ann an connspaid mu fhearann le Easbaig Dhurham: *involved in a land dispute with the Bishop of Durham*; chaidh iarraidh air, mar pheanas, colaiste a stèidheachadh: *he was required, as a penance, to establish a college*; le bhith a' cur airgead ris a' cholaiste airson 's gum biodh i seasmhach: *by funding the college so that it would be long-lasting*; ann an ciste bheag ìbhri: *in a small ivory kist*; air a tiodhlacadh ri a taobh: *buried by her side*; mar chomharra air a' ghaol a bh' aice air an duine aic': *as a mark of the love she had for her husband*; 's e togalach drùidhteach a th' ann: *it's an impressive building*; a dh'fhuiling an dèidh an Ath-leasachaidh: *which suffered after the Reformation*; brèagha mar thobhta: *beautiful as a ruin*; cha robh Diorbhail beò fada gu leòr: *Devorgilla wasn't alive long enough*; airson faicinn mar a chaidh inbhe Rìgh na h-Alba a bhuileachadh air a' ghille aice, Iain: *to see how her son John became declared King of Scotland*; aig droch àm nuair a bha Rìgh Eideard Shasainn a' feuchainn ri smachd a ghabhail air Alba: *at a bad time when King Edward of England was trying to gain control of Scotland*; 's e sgeulachd airson latha eile a tha sin: *that's a story for another day*.

**Puing-chànain na Litreach:** *I have given the woman's name as Diorbhail in (modern) Gaelic and Devorgilla in its (Latinized) English form but it actually exists in other forms as well. The college she endowed, Balliol at Oxford, which is celebrating its 750<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, provides scholarships for woman known as Dervorguilla scholarships, demonstrating another spelling of the name. The Gaelic original is thought to be Dearbhfhorghaill, alternatively given as Derborgaill or Dearbhorgil.*

**Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach:** bha ise air a bhith a' giùlan a chridhe spìosraichte cuide rithe fad na h-ùine: *she had been carrying his **embalmed** heart with her all the time.*

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