

# **Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh**

**le Ruairidh MacIlleathain**

## **Ailean Dubh Mac Raghnaill (2)**

*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 1,105. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 801 corresponds to Litir 1,105.*

B' e a' bhliadhna sia ceud deug 's a trì (1603). Bha Ailean Dubh Mac Raghnaill – a bhuineadh do Ghleanna Garadh – air teicheadh bho Chloinn 'ic Coinnich. Chaidh e am falach air eilean ann an Loch Lunndaidh ann an Gleanna Garadh. Bha e **am measg a mhuinntir fhèin** an sin. 'S e Eilean Mhic Raghnaill an t-ainm a th' air an eilean.

Tro thìde, fhuair Clann 'ic Coinnich a-mach cà' robh Ailean. Bha iad fhathast ag iarraidh a mharbhadh, air sàillibh an sgrios a rinn e air na daoine aca anns an Eilean Dubh. Thug iad bàta beag – **coit** –leotha, airson faighinn a-null don eilean. Ghiùlain iad a' choit suas Gleann Urchardain, agus tarsainn a' mhonaidh gus an do ràinig iad Abhainn Mhoireasdan.

Chaidh iad tarsainn na h-aibhne an sin, agus ghabh iad fois aig creag ris an canar, chun an latha an-diugh, Creag a' Choit. Tha a' chreag faisg air drochaid Tòrr a' Ghoill. An uair sin, chaidh iad gu deas, tarsainn a' mhonaidh, gu ruige Loch Lunndaidh. Bha a' choit aca fhathast.

Ge-tà, nuair a ràinig iad Loch Lunndaidh, cha robh sgeul air Ailean Dubh. Bha e air rabhadh fhaighinn gun robh e ann an cunnart, agus bha e air a dhol am falach am measg an fhraoich 's nan creag. Lethach-slighe eadar Loch Lunndaidh agus Gleann Moireasdan, tha mullach air a bheil Càrn Mhic Raghnaill.

Deas air Càrn Mhic Raghnaill, tha beinn air a bheil Meall nan Gearran. A rèir Uilleim MhicAoidh, 's e Meall a' Ghro a bh' air mar ainm an uair sin. Air an taobh an ear dheth, tha Uamh Ailein Mhic Raghnaill fhathast clàraichte air mapaichean. Sin an t-àite far an deach Ailean Dubh am falach. Tha mi an dùil gur e àite iargalta a th' ann.

Fhuair Ailean taic bho chlachair an uamh a thogail le clachan eadar dà lic. Bha an t-eagal air Ailean nach cumadh an clachair a bheul dùinte, agus mharbh e e. 'S e droch dhuine a bh' ann an Ailean Dubh.

Shaoileamaid nach biodh saoghal fada aig Ailean Dubh Mac Raghnaill an dèidh sin, ach bha e fortanach. Bha e air a dhìon leis na Granndaich a bha nan uachdarain ann an Gleann Moireasdan.

Dh'fheuch am ministear – an t-Urr. Iain MacCoinnich – ann an Cill Iùrnain anns an Eilean Dubh ri Ailean a thoirt gu cùirt. Chaidh casaidean a chur air Ailean gun robh e air grunn dhaoine a mharbhadh, gun robh e air seachd taighean fichead a sgrios, maille ris na saibhlean, bàthaichean agus àthan aca. Bha am ministear a'

cumail a-mach cuideachd gun do sgrios Ailean an leabharlann aige, gun do mhill e a chuid arbhair agus gun do ghoid e a chrodh is eich.

Chaidh a' chuis don chùirt anns an Iuchar, sia ceud deug, fichead 's a dhà (1622). Cha do nochd Ailean Dubh. Chaidh a ghairm na eucoireach, agus chaill e a chuid fearainn.

Ge-tà, bha e air a dhìon leis a' Ghranndach, a cheannaich seann oighreachd Ailein bhon Chrùn. An uair sin, a rèir choltais, thug an Granndach am fearann air ais a dh' Ailean, agus gheall Ailean gum biodh e fhèin agus a shliochd dìleas a-chaidh do chinn-chinnidh nan Granndach. Cha do dh'fhuiling Ailean Dubh peanas – ach 's dòcha peanas a chogais fhèin – airson nan droch ghnothaichean anns an robh e an sàs.

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**Faclan na Litreach:** Lunndaidh: *Lundie*; Tòrr a' Ghoill: *Torgyle*; letheach-slighe: *halfway*; mullach: *summit*; Cill Iùrnain: *Killearnan*; casaidean: *accusations* (*prosecution*); peanas: *punishment*.

**Abairtean na Litreach:** tro thìde, fhuair Clann 'ic Coinnich a-mach cà' robh Ailean: *in time, the Mackenzies found out where Allan was*; ghabh iad fois: *they took rest*; bha e air rabhadh fhaighinn: *he had been warned*; am falach am measg an fhraoich 's nan creag: *into hiding among the heather and rocks*; air an taobh an ear dheth: *on the east side of it*; tha Uamh Ailein Mhic Raghnaill fhathast clàraichte air mapaichean: *'the cave of Ailean Mac Raghnaill' is still marked on maps*; tha mi an dùil gur e àite iargalta a th' ann: *I expect it's a forbidding place*; fhuair Ailean taic bho chlachair an uamh a thogail le clachan eadar dà lic: *Allan received help from a mason to build a cave with stones between two ledges*; nach cumadh an clachair a bheul dùinte: *that the mason wouldn't keep his mouth closed*; 's e droch dhuine a bh' ann an Ailean Dubh: *Ailean Dubh was a bad man*; shaoileamaid nach biodh saoghal fada aig X: *we'd think that X wouldn't have a long life*; air a dhìon leis na Granndaich a bha nan uachdarain: *defended by the Grants who were the lairds*; gun robh e air seach taighean fichead a sgrios, maille ris na saibhlean, bàthaichean agus àthan aca: *that he had destroyed 27 houses, along with their barns, byres and kilns*; gun do mhill e a chuid arbhair agus gun do ghoid e a chrodh is eich: *that he destroyed his grain crops and that he stole his cattle and horses*; gum biodh e fhèin agus a shliochd dìleas a-chaidh: *that he and his offspring would be forever loyal*.

**Puing-chànain na Litreach:** Thug iad bàta beag – coit –leotha: *they took a small boat – a coit – with them. When I first saw Creag a' Choit on the map near the Torgyle Bridge (over which the traffic between Loch Ness and Lochalsh passes), I presumed it referred to an old ferrying place where a coit was used before the construction of a bridge. However, oral tradition puts a different spin on it, telling us it was named from the MacKenzies carrying a coit across the river here, before taking it over the hills to Loch Lundie in order to flush out Ailean Dubh Mac Raghnaill from his island hiding place in 1603 or 1604.*

**Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach:** Bha e am measg a mhuinntir fhèin an sin: *he was among his own people there.*

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