

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Uilleam Hare (4)

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 1,371. There is also a simpler version – An Litir Bheag – which is broadcast at 2:30pm each Sunday. Litir Bheag 1,067 corresponds to Litir 1,371. The Litir is also available at www.bbc.co.uk/litir and www.learnghaelic.scot/litir. Ruairidh can be contacted at fios@learnghaelic.scot.

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh mu Uilleam Maxwell, am 'Breabadair Teine'. Bha e a' fuireach air a' Chomraich. Bha cuid dhen bheachd gum b' esan am murtair Uilleam Hare fo ainm eile.

Tha eachdraiche le eòlas math air an sgìre air a bhith a' toirt sùil gheur air an fhianais, agus air na clàran eachdraidheil. Is esan **Ailean MacGillÌosa**. Buinidh e don Chomraich agus tha e a' fuireach ann.

Tha Ailean air cunntas sgrìobhte mun chùis a lorg, a nochd ann an clò anns an 'Highland News' ann an naoi ceud deug 's a trì (1903). Bha sin na bu lugha na ceathrad bliadhna an dèidh bàs Mhaxwell. Ach chan eil an sgrìobhadair ag ainmeachadh Mhaxwell.

Tha Uilleam Maxwell a' nochdadh anns a' chunntas-sluaigh air a' Chomraich ann an ochd ceud deug, caogad 's a h-aon (1851). Bha sin còrr is fichead bliadhna an dèidh do Hare a bhith ri murt ann an Dùn Èideann.

Bha Maxwell pòsta aig tè Màiri. Bha ceathrar chloinne aca. Rugadh an leanabh a b' òige aca air a' Chomraich. Ach rugadh an fheadhainn eile ann an Gleann Eilg no Cnòideart.

Fhuair Ailean a-mach gun robh Maxwell na Èireannach, a rugadh ann an soitheach aig muir – am badeigin anns a' Chuan Siar. Bha athair na mharaiche. Phòs Uilleam tè Mairead Blue, a rugadh ann an Èirinn. Ghluais iad, leis na nigheanan aca, a Chinn Tìre ann an Alba. Bha sin aig deireadh nan tritheadan. Tha e a' coimhead coltach gun robh Maxwell a' fuireach ann an Èirinn nuair a bha Hare ann an Dùn Èideann. Tuigidh sibh gu bheil Ailean dhen bheachd nach e an aon duine a bh' annta.

Bha Uilleam na bhreabadair ach bha iad bochd. Bha e fhèin agus tè de na nigheanan aige an sàs ann an eucoir agus chuir iad seachad ùine anns a' phrìosan. Fhad 's a bha Uilleam anns a' phrìosan, bha an còrr de a theaghlach a' fuireach ann an Ceann Loch Cille Chiarain.

Cha do mhair am pòsadh eadar Uilleam agus Mairead. Nuair a nochdas Maxwell air a' Chomraich, tha bean ùr aige – Màiri Mhaitland a bhuineadh do Cheann Loch Cille Chiarain. Bha iad a' fuireach ann an Cnòideart no Gleann Eilg mus deach iad don Chomraich. Bha Mairead fhathast a' fuireach ann an Ceann Loch Cille Chiarain agus fhathast fon ainm Maxwell. Bha i a' **cumail a-mach** gur e banntrach a

bh' innte ged a bha an duine aice fhathast beò. Chan eil e soilleir an robh gin de na pòsaidhean aig Maxwell oifigeil, a rèir an lagh.

Bha nighean Uilleim, Maria Maxwell, a' fuireach air a' Chomraich. Bha mac-diòlain aice dom b' ainm Iain. Thathar ag ràdh gum b' e athair fear a bha ag obair anns an taigh-mhòr, ach chan eil ainm air a theisteanas-bhreith.

Phòs Maria fear Uilleam Norris agus chaidh iad a dh'fhuireach ann an Siorrachd Obar Dheathain faisg air Ceann Phàdraig. Mu dheireadh, an dèidh bàs Uilleim air a' Chomraich, ghluais a h-uile duine dhen teaghlach a Shiorrachd Obar Dheathain. Chaidh Uilleam a thiodhlacadh ann an uaigh neo-chomharraichte ann an Cladh a' Chlachain air a' Chomraich.

Tha Ailean MacGillÌosa dhen bheachd, le cinnt, nach e Hare a bh' ann an Maxwell. B' e Maxwell am Breabadair Teine ach cha b' e am murtair droch-chliùiteach a bha a' reic chorp don lannsair Raibeart Knox.

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Faclan na Litreach: murtair: *murderer*; clàran eachdraidheil: *historical records*; cunntas-sluaigh: *census*; Cinn Tìre: *Kintyre*; Ceann Loch Cille Chiarain: *Campbeltown*.

Abairtean na Litreach: Tha eachdraiche le eòlas math air an sgìre air a bhith a' toirt sùil gheur air an fhianais: *a historian with a great knowledge of the area has been examining the evidence*; a nochd ann an clò: *that appeared in print*; na bu lugha na ceathrad bliadhna an dèidh bàs X: *less than forty years after the death of X*; còrr is fichead bliadhna an dèidh do Hare a bhith ri murt: *more than twenty years after Hare was involved in murder*; rugadh an leanabh a b' òige aca air a' Chomraich: *their youngest child was born in Applecross*; rugadh an fheadhainn eile ann an Gleann Eilg no Cnòideart: *the others were born in Glenelg or Knoydart*; am badeigin anns a' Chuan Siar: *somewhere in the Atlantic Ocean*; bha athair na mharaiche: *his father was a mariner*; deireadh nan tritheadan: *the end of the thirties*; gu bheil Ailean dhen bheachd nach e an aon duine a bh' annta: *that Alan is of the opinion that they are not the same person*; bha e fhèin agus tè de na nigheanan aige an sàs ann an eucoir: *he and one of his daughters were involved in crime*; chuir iad seachad ùine anns a' phrìosan: *they spent time in prison*; cha do mhair am pòsadh: *the marriage did not last*; bha mac-diòlain aice dom b' ainm Iain: *she had a child born out of wedlock called John*; chaidh iad a dh'fhuireach ann an Siorrachd Obar Dheathain faisg air Ceann Phàdraig: *they went to live in Aberdeenshire near Peterhead*; ann an uaigh neo-chomharraichte ann an Cladh a' Chlachain: *in an unmarked grave in the Clachan Cemetery*; a' reic chorp don lannsair: *selling bodies to the surgeon*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: Is esan Ailean MacGillÌosa: *he is Alan Gillies*. Alan is the author of a number of detailed and well-researched articles about the history and heritage of Applecross which give due respect to its status as a Gaelic community. His fascinating article about Hare/Maxwell can be accessed at [The mysterious fate of 'body-snatcher' William Hare: did he find sanctuary in Applecross \(A' Chomraich\)? | Applecross history](#). He does warn the reader not to read to the end if they wish to preserve the notion that Maxwell really was Hare!

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: Bha i a' cumail a-mach gur e banntrach a bh' innte: *she was maintaining that she was a widow*.

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