

# Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

## Raiders Bhatarsaigh (1)

*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 1,257. There is also a simpler version – An Litir Bheag – which is broadcast at 2:30pm each Sunday. Litir Bheag 953 corresponds to Litir 1,257. The Litir is also available at [www.bbc.co.uk/litir](http://www.bbc.co.uk/litir) and [www.learnghaelic.scot/litir](http://www.learnghaelic.scot/litir). Ruairidh can be contacted at [fios@learnghaelic.scot](mailto:fios@learnghaelic.scot).*

'S e bana-ghaisgeach na Gàidhlig a th' ann an Lisa Storey. Airson ùine mhòr, tha Lisa air a bhith a' fuireach ann an Inbhir Nis no faisg air a' bhaile. Bha dreuchd aice mar **neach-teagaisg** agus b' i a' chiad **tidsear** aig an robh clas de sgoilearan air a' Ghàidhealtachd a fhuair an cuid foghlaim tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig. Bha sin ann am Bun-sgoil a' Mheadhain ann an Inbhir Nis ann an naoi ceud deug, ochdad 's a còig (1985).

Ged a tha i air a bhith a' fuireach air tìr-mòr thar nan deicheadan, tha mi cinnteach gum buin a cridhe fhathast don eilean anns an do thogadh i – Bhatarsaigh. Mura h-eil sibh eòlach air na h-Eileanan A-muigh, tha Bhatarsaigh ri taobh Bharraigh, agus ceangailte ris an-diugh le cabhsair. Anns an leabhar ùr aice 'Bhatarsaigh agus na Raiders', tha Lisa ag innse dhuinn gun robh 'Gàidhlig ga bruidhinn a h-uile latha agus anns a h-uile suidheachadh' anns an eilean aice nuair a bha i òg.

Tha an leabhar ag innse mu na Raiders, eileanaich a fhuair fearann dhaibh fhèin ann am Bhatarsaigh le a bhith a' strì airson an còraichean. Ann an naoi ceud deug 's a h-ochd (1908), cheannaich an riaghaltas an t-eilean bhon uachdaran, a' Bhaintighearna Gòrdan Cathcart. Chaidh caogad 's a h-ochd croitean a chruthachadh ann.

Airson an suidheachadh a thuigsinn, thèid sinn air ais gu ochd ceud deug, trithead 's a h-ochd (1838). 'S ann an uair sin a reic MacNèill Bharraigh – an ceann-cinnidh – an oighreachd aige. Cheannaich uachdaran-fearainn à Siorrachd Obar Dheathain i. B' esan an Còirneal Gòrdan à Cluanaidh. An ceann greis, thòisich e air daoine fhuadachadh à Barraigh. Tha Lisa Storey ag innse dhuinn gun deach **mu cheithir cheud gu leth** duine à Barraigh gu ruige Canada ann an ochd ceud deug, caogad 's a h-aon (1851).

Cha b' e sin a-mhàin. Chaidh daoine a chur a-mach às na bailtean aca ann am Barraigh fhèin – gu bailtean eile – airson fearann math a shaoradh do thuathanaich. Bha Eilean Bhatarsaigh air fad na thuathanas. Cha robh air fhàgail aig muinntir an àite ach fearann truagh. Agus bha gu leòr de na daoine nan coitearan. Cha robh fearann aca idir.

Chaochail an Còirneal Gòrdan agus an ceann greis fhuair a nighean-chèile – a' Bhaintighearna Gòrdan Cathcart – sealbh air an oighreachd. Bha i am measg nan

uachdaran a bu mhiosa air a' Ghàidhealtachd riamh. Lean i oirre leis na fuadaichean. Ged a bha an oighreachd na làmhnan fad iomadh bliadhna, cha do chuir i a cas oirre ach aon turas.

Tha Lisa Storey a' mineachadh mar a chuidich Achd nan Croitearan na croitearan ann am Barraigh, ach cha d' fhuair na coitearan buannachd sam bith. Bha iadsan fhathast às aonais fearann.

Cha mhòr nach robh Comhairle Siorrachd Inbhir Nis cho dona ris na h-uachdarain, oir bha cumhachd mhòr aig uachdarain air a' chomhairle an uair sin. Dhiùlt a' chomhairle fearann a ghabhail airson choitearan fon an *Allotments (Scotland) Act*. Agus dhiùlt an *Congested Districts Board* iarrtasan airson fearann ann am Barraigh cuideachd. Anns an ath Litir bheir sinn sùil air mar ghabh cuid de choitearan fearann ann am Bhatarsaigh dhaibh fhèin, ge b' oil leis an uachdaran!

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**Faclan na Litreach:** Bun-sgoil a' Mheadhain: *Central Primary School*; uachdaran: *landlord*; a' Bhaintighearna Gòrdan Cathcart: *Lady Gordon Cathcart*; Siorrachd Obar Dheathain: *Aberdeenshire*; an Còirneal Gòrdan à Cluanaidh: *Colonel Gordon of Cluny*; gu ruige [Canada]: *to [Canada]*; coitearan: *cottars [people who had no rights to land]*; a nighean-chèile: *his daughter-in-law*; às aonais: *without*; achd: *act (e.g. of Parliament)*; Comhairle Siorrachd Inbhir Nis: *Inverness-shire County Council*.

**Abairtean na Litreach:** 'S e bana-ghaisgeach na Gàidhlig a th' ann an Lisa Storey: *Lisa Storey is a Gaelic heroine*; a fhuair an cuid foghlaim tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig: *who received their education through the medium of Gaelic*; a' fuireach air tìr-mòr thar nan deicheadan: *living on the mainland for decades*; tha mi cinnteach gum buin a cridhe fhathast don eilean anns an do thogadh i – Bhatarsaigh: *I'm certain that her heart still belongs to the island in which she was raised - Vatersay*; ceangailte ris an-diugh le cabhsair: *connected to it today by a causeway*; gun robh 'Gàidhlig ga bruidhinn a h-uile latha agus anns a h-uile suidheachadh': *that Gaelic was spoken every day and in every situation*; a fhuair fearann dhaibh fhèin: *that got land for themselves*; a' strì airson an còraichean: *struggling for their rights*; 's ann an uair sin a reic MacNèill Bharraigh – an ceann-cinnidh – an oighreachd aige: *it's then that MacNeil of Barra – the clan chief – sold his estate*; an ceann greis, thòisich e air daoine fhuadachadh à Barraigh: *after a while he started to clear people from Barra*; cha b' e sin a-mhàin: *it wasn't just that*; airson fearann math a shaoradh do thuathanaich: *to release good land to farmers*; bha Eilean Bhatarsaigh air fad na thuathanas: *Vatersay was a farm in its entirety*; cha do chuir i a cas oirre ach aon turas: *she only stepped on it on one occasion*; ge b' oil leis an uachdaran: *regardless of the landlord*.

**Puing-chànain na Litreach:** Bha dreuchd aice mar **neach-teagaisg** agus b' i a' chiad **tidsear** aig an robh ...: *she had a profession as a teacher and she was the first teacher who had ... In Gaelic we have a choice of common words used for 'teacher'. One is neach-teagaisg 'teaching person' and the other is tidsear which is a modern loanword from English. Both are legitimate. The plurals are luchd-teagaisg and tidsearan. You might also hear maighstir-sgoile and bana-mhaighstir sgoile although these are now seen as somewhat old-fashioned and are going out of common usage except in a historical context.*

**Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: mu cheithir cheud gu leth duine: *about four hundred and fifty* [*four hundred and a half*] *people*.**

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