

# Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

## **Raiders Bhatarsaigh (2)**

*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 1,258. There is also a simpler version – An Litir Bheag – which is broadcast at 2:30pm each Sunday. Litir Bheag 954 corresponds to Litir 1,258. 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).*

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh mun leabhar 'Bhatarsaigh agus na Raiders' le Lisa Storey. Tha e mu dheidhinn suidheachadh an fhearainn ann am Barraigh is Bhatarsaigh **o chionn còrr math is ceud bliadhna.**

Seo mar a mhìnich Lisa chòir an suidheachadh aig toiseach an fhicheadamh linn: 'Mu dheireadh, a' faireachdainn gun robh iad air na b' urrainn dhaibh a dhèanamh an taobh a-staigh den lagh, gun sgath aca air a shon, ghabh na coitearan orra gun gabhadh iad am fearann dhaibh fhèin. Air an ochdamh latha dhen t-Sultain 1900, ghlac grunn choitearan pìosan fearainn anns a' Bhàgh a Tuath [ann am Barraigh]. Agus air an t-siathamh latha fichead den t-Sultain, chaidh grunn eile de choitearan a-null à Barraigh gu Eilean Bhatarsaigh, agus chomharraich iad a-mach pìosan fearainn – 'croitean' – dhaibh fhèin.' B' iad sin na 'Raiders'. **A' chiad fheadhainn**, co-dhiù.

Beagan mhìosan an dèidh sin, cheannaich an *Congested Districts Board* fearann ann am Barraigh airson croitean a chruthachadh. Ach cha do rinn iad dad airson nan coitearan a bha ag iarraidh fearann ann am Bhatarsaigh. Bha am Bòrd ag iarraidh an t-eilean air fad a cheannach ach chuir an t-uachdaran, a' Bhaintighearna Gòrdan Cathcart, pris ro mhòr air.

Ann an naoi ceud deug 's a trì (1903), cheannaich am Bòrd fearann ann am Bhatarsaigh far an cuireadh coitearan buntàta. Ach cha do riarraich sin na coitearan. Lean iad orra le bhith a' gabhail fearann dhaibh fhèin, agus a' togail sheadaichean air. Ceithir bliadhna an dèidh sin, chaidh buidheann à Miughlaigh ann cuideachd.

Tha Miughlaigh na eilean brèagha le fearann math air aon taobh dheth. Tha e deas air Barraigh is Bhatarsaigh. Bha an t-iasgach timcheall an eilein math ach cha robh cala no acarsaid airson an eathraichean. Bha muinntir Mhiughlaigh ag iasgach a-mach à Bàgh a' Chaisteil ann am Barraigh agus a' fuireach air bòrd an eathraichean cuid mhath dhen ùine.

Seo mar a mhìnich fear de na Raiders à Miughlaigh, Micheal Dhòmhnail, Micheal Mac a Phì, a' chùis: '... sin an aon bheò-shlàin' a bh' aca – dh'fheumadh iad a bhith ris an iasgach, 's cha robh iad ach ag iarraidh àite nan taighean ri taobh a' chladaich ann am Bhatarsaigh. Thàinig ceathrar à Miughlaigh a Bhatarsaigh ann an 1907, agus thog iad seadaichean beaga an oir a' chladaich ...'

A-nise ghabh an t-uachdaran ceum an aghaidh nan Raiders. Chaidh òrdugh laghail, no *interdict*, a thoirt don deichnear a bh' air fearann no làraichean taighe a ghabhail dhaibh fhèin. Bha aca ri nochdadh anns a' chùirt ann an Dùn Èideann. Cha ghealladh iad gum fàgadh iad Bhatarsaigh. Leis gun robh an lagh a' taobhadh leis an uachdaran, chaidh binn dà mhìos sa phrìosan a chur orra. Thàinig iad a-mach nan gaisgich, seach nan eucoirich, do gu leòr.

Seo na thuirt Mìcheal Mac a Phi: '... chaidh an gnothach a chur a Thaigh na Pàrlamaid. 'S e bh' ann gun do cheannaich an Crùn Bhatarsaigh. Gheàrr iad a-mach na chroitean an uair sin e, 's chuir iad crainn an Dùn Èideann, feuch cò gheibheadh croitean.'

'S e stòiridh air leth a th' ann, agus ma tha sibh airson leughadh mu dheidhinn ann an Gàidhlig, cha b' urrainn na b' fheàrr na 'Bhatarsaigh agus na Raiders' le Lisa Storey.

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**Faclan na Litreach:** a' Bhaintighearna Gòrdan Cathcart: *Lady Gordon Cathcart*; Miughlaigh: *Mingulay*; iasgach: *fishing*; Bàgh a' Chaisteil: *Castlebay*; deichnear: *ten people*; làraichean taighe: *house sites*.

**Abairtean na Litreach:** mu dheidhinn suidheachadh an fhearainn ann am Barraigh is Bhatarsaigh: *about the land situation in Barra and Vatersay*; seo mar a mhinicheas X an suidheachadh aig toiseach an fhicheadamh linn: *here's how X explains the situation at the beginning of the twentieth century*; a' faireachdainn gun robh iad air na b' urrainn dhaibh a dhèanamh an taobh a-staigh den lagh: *feeling that they had done what they could within the law*; gun sgath aca air a shon: *without achieving anything*; ghabh na coitearan orra gun gabhadh iad am fearann dhaibh fhèin: *the cottars decided to take the land for themselves*; ghlac grunn choitearan pìosan fearainn anns a' Bhàgh a Tuath: *a few cottars took bits of land in Northbay*; chomharraich iad a-mach pìosan fearainn – 'croitean' – dhaibh fhèin: *they marked out pieces of land – crofts – for themselves*; bha am Bòrd ag iarraidh an t-eilean air fad a cheannach: *the Board wanted to buy the entire island*; chuir an t-uachdaran prìs ro mhòr air: *the landlord put too great a price on it*; far an cuireadh coitearan buntàta: *where the cottars would plant potatoes*; cha robh cala no acarsaid airson an eathraichean: *there was no harbour or anchorage for their boats*; sin an aon bheò-shlàin' a bh' aca: *that's the one way of making a living that they had*; thog iad seadaichean beaga an oir a' chladaich: *they built small sheds at the edge of the shore*; bha aca ri nochdadh anns a' chùirt ann an Dùn Èideann: *they had to appear in court in Edinburgh*; cha ghealladh iad gum fàgadh iad Bhatarsaigh: *they wouldn't promise that they would leave Vatersay*; binn dà mhìos sa phrìosan: *a sentence of two months in prison*; thàinig iad a-mach nan gaisgich: *they came out as heroes*; chuir iad crainn, feuch cò gheibheadh croitean: *they drew lots to see who would get crofts*; cha b' urrainn na b' fheàrr na: *you wouldn't get better than*.

**Puing-chànain na Litreach:** o chionn còrr math is ceud bliadhna: *a good bit over a hundred years ago. This is a very useful expression. Here are some other examples: còrr math is ceud millean bliadhna air ais 'a good bit over a hundred million years ago'; thàinig mi a dh'fhuireach an seo o chionn còrr math is fichead bliadhna 'I came to live here well over twenty years ago.'*

**Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach:** A' chiad fheadhainn, co-dhiù: *the first ones, anyway.*

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