

An Litir Bheag

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

An Litir Bheag is a shortened and simplified version of Ruairidh's Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh (also available on the BBC website), designed for those who are at an earlier stage of learning Gaelic. The topic each week is the same as Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh so that, once the Litir Bheag is mastered, a student of the language might wish to try the full Litir. This is Litir Bheag 26 (which corresponds to Litir 330). Ruairidh would welcome feedback on An Litir Bheag from listeners/readers. He can be contacted at roddy.maclean@bbc.co.uk.

Chaidh Cuimrich a dh'fhuireach ann an Saskatchewan, ann an Canada. Bha sin o chionn còrr is ceud bliadhna. Ach cha robh na Cuimrich sin às a' Chuimrigh. Bha iad à Ameireagaidh a Deas.

Tha an stòiridh a' tòiseachadh ann an ochd ceud deug, seasgad 's a còig (1865). Dh'fhàg feadhainn a' Chuimrigh. Sheòl iad a-mach à Liverpool. Bha iad a' dol a dhèanamh dachaigh ùr Chuimreach dhaibh fhèin ann an Argentina. Bha iad ag iarraidh an cànan aca a ghlèidheadh.

Chaidh iad a Phatagonia. Tha sin fad air falbh bho Buenos Aires. Bha riaghaltas Argentina ag iarraidh daoine ùra ann am Patagonia. Fad air falbh o bhuaidh na Spàinntis is buaidh na Beurla, thog na Cuimrich coimhearsnachdan Cuimreach. Bha siostam-lagha Cuimreach aca. Bha a' Chuimris aca mar chànan.

Ach anns na naochadan dhen naoidheamh linn deug, dh'atharraich gnothaichean anns na bailtean mòra aca. Chaidh coigrich a dh'fhuireach anns na bailtean sin. Cha robh Cuimris aig na coigrich. Agus bha an riaghaltas ann am Buenos Aires ag iarraidh Spàinntis anns na sgoiltean, seach Cuimris. Bha cuid de na Cuimrich ag iarraidh gluasad air falbh gu dùthaich eile.

Fhuair iad fearann ann an Saskatchewan. Ann an naoi ceud deug 's a dhà (1902), dh'fhàg còrr is dà cheud Cuimreach Patagonia. Sheòl iad gu Liverpool. An uair sin, sheòl iad gu Canada. Bha iad air bòrd an t-soithich, an Numidian. Chaidh iad gu Quebec an toiseach. Ràinig iad Saskatchewan anns an Iuchar.

Tha clàr ann dhen luchd-siubhail air an Numidian. Tha 208 Cuimreach air a' chlàr. A rèir a' chlàir, rugadh iad uile ann am Patagonia. Ach tha mi a' smaoinichadh nach eil sin ceart. Bha cuid aca ro shean airson sin. Rugadh feadhainn anns a' Chuimrigh, chaidh iad a dh'Argentina agus bha iad a-nise air a dhol a Chanada. Tha iad car coltach ris na Gàidheil Albannach a chaidh a dh'Alba Nuadh, is an uair sin gu Astràilia is an uair sin gu New Zealand.

Ceud bliadhna às dèidh gun do ràinig na Cuimrich Saskatchewan, tha an cultar lag, a rèir choltais. Eucoltach ri Cuimrich Phatagonia agus muinntir na Cuimrich fhèin, cha do ghlèidh an fheadhainn ann an Saskatchewan an cànan. 'S iomadh rud a chailleas fear na h-imrich. 'S dòcha gun do rinn Cuimrich Saskatchewan cus imrich.

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Faclan is abairtean: Chaidh Cuimrich a dh'fhuireach ann an Saskatchewan: *Welsh people went to live in Saskatchewan; o chionn còrr is ceud bliadhna: more than a hundred years ago; bha iad à Ameireagaidh a Deas: they were from South America; sheòl iad a-mach à Liverpool: they sailed out of Liverpool; bha iad a' dol a dhèanamh dachaigh ùr dhaibh fhèin: they were going to make a new home for themselves; bha iad ag iarraidh an cànan aca a ghlèidheadh: they wanted to retain their language; fad air falbh o bhuidh na Spàinntis is buaidh na Beurla: far away from the influence of Spanish and English; coimhearsnachdan: communities; siostam-lagha: legal system; anns na naochadan dhen naoidheamh linn deug: in the nineties of the nineteenth century (ie the 1890s); chaidh coigrich a dh'fhuireach anns na bailtean sin: foreigners went to live in those towns; Spàinntis anns na sgoiltean, seach Cuimris: Spanish in the schools, rather than Welsh; fhuair iad fearann: they obtained land; bha iad air bòrd an t-soithich: they were on board the vessel; ràinig iad Saskatchewan anns an Iuchar: they reached Saskatchewan in July; tha clàr ann dhen luchd-siubhail: there is a list of the travellers; rugadh iad uile ann am Patagonia: they were all born in Patagonia; bha cuid aca ro shean airson sin: some of them were too old for that; bha iad a-nise air a dhol a Chanada: they had now gone to Canada; ceud bliadhna às dèidh gun do ràinig na Cuimrich Saskatchewan: a hundred years after the Welsh reached Saskatchewan; tha an cultar lag, a rèir choltais: their culture is weak, it appears; eucoltach ri Cuimrich Phatagonia: unlike the Welsh of Patagonia; cha do ghlèidh an fheadhainn ann an Saskatchewan an cànan: the ones in Saskatchewan didn't retain their language; 's iomadh rud a chailleas fear na h-imrich: the flitting man loses much (a Gaelic proverb); 's dòcha gun do rinn Cuimrich Saskatchewan cus imrich: perhaps the Saskatchewan Welsh migrated too much.*