

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 35 (which corresponds to Litir 339). Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.maclean@bbc.co.uk.

Eadar Melbourne agus na raointean òir, bha na rathaidean cunnartach. Bha mèirlich ann. Bha na mèinneadairean a' faighinn cuidhteas airson an òir. B' e sin pìos pàipeir a bha ag innse luach an òir. Bha iad a' dol gu Melbourne leis na pìosan pàipeir sin. Bha iad a' faighinn airgead ann am Melbourne. Ach bha na mèirlich a' goid nan cuidhteasan. Uaireannan bha iad a' murt mèinneadair.

Bha an t-Urr Tormod MacLeòid air an rathad eadar Melbourne agus na raointean òir. Thachair e ri mèirlich. Ach cha robh cuidhteas òir aige. Cha robh airgead aige. Bha e bochd. Chunnaic na mèirlich sin. Cha do rinn iad cron air. Thug iad cuireadh dha dhol don champa aca airson na h-oidhche. Chaidh e ann. Thug e trod dhaibh airson a bhith olc. Bha iad toilichte nuair a dh'fhalbh e sa mhadainn.

Ann am Baile nan Teantaichean ann am Melbourne, bha an t-uisge salach. Bhris am fiabhras breac a-mach. Ghabh an triùir mhac as òige aig Tormod am fiabhras. Taobh a-staigh sia seachdainean bha iad marbh. 'S e buille chruaidh chruaidh a bh' ann.

Chuala Tormod is càch mu New Zealand. Bha talamh math ann. Agus cha robh òr ann. Bha iad toilichte mu dheidhinn sin. Sgrìobh Tormod gu Riaghladair na dùthcha, Sir Seòras Grey. Sgrìobh Sir Seòras air ais. Bu chòir dhaibh dhol ann, thuirt e.

Bha cuid de mhuinntir Cheap Bhreatainn fhathast ann an Adelaide. Reic iad an soitheach aca, an *Highland Lass*. Cheannaich iad soitheach eile, an *Gazelle*. As t-Sultain, ochd ceud deug, leth-cheud 's a trì (1853), sheòl an *Gazelle* à Adelaide. Bha còrr is ceud duine air bòrd. Cha robh rùm air bòrd airson muinntir Mhelbourne.

Chaidh an *Gazelle* a dh'Auckland. Chunnaic na daoine air bòrd àite math air tìr. Bha sin gu tuath air Auckland. Bha iad ag iarraidh fearann ann. Ach bha Sir Seòras Grey ag iarraidh orra dhol gu deas air Auckland. No don Eilean mu Dheas.

Ach chaidh na h-Albannaich gu tuath. Thug iad sùil air a' chladach. Lorg iad fearann math. Bha sin ri taobh Abhainn Waipu. Rinn iad tagradh airson an fhearainn. Bha sanas anns a' phàipear-naidheachd. Ach nochd sanas eile bho fhear, Seumas Busby. "S ann leamsa a tha am fearann sin," thuirt e. "Chan fhaod duine gnothach a ghabhail ris gun chead."

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Faclan is abairtean: raointean òir: *goldfields*; cunnartach: *dangerous*; mèirlich: *robbers, bushrangers*; bha na mèinneadairean a' faighinn cuidhteas airson an òir: *the miners got a receipt for their gold*; bha ag innse luach an òir: *which told the value of the gold*; a' goid: *stealing*; uaireannan bha iad a' murt mèinneadair: *sometimes they murdered a miner*; an t-Urr Tormod MacLeòid: *Rev Norman McLeod*; thachair e ri: *he met (by chance)*; cha do rinn iad cron air: *they didn't harm him*; thug iad cuireadh dha dhol don champa aca: *they gave him an invitation to go to their camp*; airson na h-oidhche: *for the night*; nuair a dh'fhalbh e sa mhadainn: *when he left in the morning*; Baile nan Teantaichean: "*Canvastown*"; salach: *dirty*; bhris am fiabhras breac a-mach: *typhoid fever broke out*; ghabh an trìùir mhac as òige aig Tormod am fiabhras: *Norman's three youngest sons caught the fever*; taobh a-staigh sia seachdainean: *inside six weeks*; 's e buille chruaidh chruaidh a bh' ann: *it was a terrible blow*; riaghladair: *governor*; sgrìobh Sir Seòras air ais: *Sir George wrote back*; bu chòir dhaibh dhol ann, thuirt e: *they should go [there], he said*; cuid de mhuinntir Cheap Bhreatainn: *some of the Cape Breton folk*; soitheach: *vessel*; cha robh rùm air bòrd airson muinntir Mhelbourne: *there was no room on board for the Melbourne folk*; gu tuath air Auckland: *north of Auckland*; no don Eilean mu Dheas: *or to the South Island*; thug iad sùil air a' chladach: *they looked at the shoreline*; lorg iad fearann math: *they found good land*; rinn iad tagradh: *they made an application*; nochd sanas eile: *another notice appeared*; 's ann leamsa a tha am fearann sin: *that land belongs to me*; chan fhaod duine gnothach a ghabhail ris gun chead: *nobody can interfere with it without permission*.

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