

An Litir Bheag

Ie 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 91 (which corresponds to Litir 395). Ruairidh can be contacted at roddy.maclean@bbc.co.uk.

Bha sinn ann an Heisgeir an t-seachdain sa chaidh. Tha Heisger gu siar air Uibhist. Bha sluagh ann uaireigin. Air a' mhap tha dà ainm air na h-eileanan – *Heisker or Monach Islands*. Thàinig an t-ainm Heisgeir bho na Lochlannaich. Tha *Monach* a' tighinn bhon Ghàidhlig *Manach*. Bha manaich a' fuireach ann. Bha manachainn air fear de na h-eileanan – Siolaigh.

Bha mnathan-cràbhaidh ann cuideachd. Sin *nuns* – mnathan-cràbhaidh. 'S e *cailleach-dhubh* a thuir daoine ri *nun* o chionn fhada. Cailleach-dhubh – oir tha aodach dubh orra. Bha iadsan a' fuireach air an eilean air an taobh sear. 'S e Heisgeir nan Cailleach an t-ainm a bh' air an eilean sin. Heisgeir nan Cailleach.

Aig aon àm bha mu cheud duine a' fuireach ann. An uair sin dh'fhalbh a' chuid a bu mhotha de na daoine. Mean air mhean, thill daoine. Aig deireadh an naoidheamh linn deug, bha ceud is trithead (130) ann.

Bha feadhainn ag obair anns an taigh-sholais. Chaidh taigh-solais a thogail ann am meadhan an naoidheamh linn deug. Bha an taigh-solais ann an Siolaigh. Bha e gu math àrd. 'S iad na bràithrean Stevenson – Daibhidh agus Tòmas – a thog e. Tha solas beag anns an eilean an-diugh. Ach chan eil an taigh-solais mòr ag obair a-nise.

Thachair tubaist ann sna tritheadan – ann an naoi ceud deug, trithead 's a sia (1936). Chaill dithis am beatha. Chan e iasgairean no maraichean a bh' annta. Bha iad ag obair anns an taigh-sholais. Bha trì oifigearan ag obair ann. Thachair an tubaist mar seo.

Dh'fhalbh an dithis ann am bàta airson stuth fhaighinn. Chaidh iad gu fear eile de na h-eileanan. Dh'èirich a' ghaoth. Bha iad ag iomradh air ais a Shiolaigh. Ach bha a' mhuir garbh.

Anns an taigh-sholais, chunnaic an t-oifigear eile iad. Bha am bàta aca bunos-cionn. Bha na daoine air sgeir. Thàinig tonn mòr. Dh'fhalbh an dithis. Chaidh trì seachdainean seachad mus do lorg daoine na cuirp aca. 'S e beatha dhoirbh a bh' aig na daoine ann an Heisgeir.

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Faclan is abairtean: Heisgeir: *Heisker or Monach Islands*; gu siar air Uibhist: *west of Uist*; bha sluagh ann uaireigin: *there was once a human population*;

Lochlannaich: *Norsemen*; bha manaich a' fuireach ann: *monks lived there*; manachainn: *monastery*; Siolaigh: *Shillay*; mnathan-cràbhaidh: *nuns (the singular is bean-chràbhaidh)*; cailleach-dhubh: *nun*; air an taobh sear: *on the east side*; dh'fhalbh a' chuid a bu mhotha de na daoine: *most of the people left*; mean air mhean, thill daoine: *gradually (little by little) people returned*; deireadh an naoidheamh linn deug: *the end of the 19th Century*; bha feadhainn ag obair anns an taigh-sholais: *some worked in the lighthouse*; 's iad na bràithrean Stevenson a thog e: *it's the Stevenson brothers that built it*; thachair tubaist ann sna tritheadan: *an accident happened there in the thirties*; chaill dithis am beatha: *two people lost their lives*; chan e iasgairan no maraichean a bh' anna: *they were not fishermen or mariners*; thachair an tubaist mar seo: *the accident happened like this*; ann am bàta airson stuth fhaighinn: *in a boat to get things (supplies)*; fear eile de na h-eileanan: *another one of the islands*; dh'èirich a' ghaoth: *the wind got up*; ag iomradh air ais a Shiolaigh: *rowing back to Shillay*; chunnaic an t-oifigear eile iad: *the other officer saw them*; thàinig tonn mòr: *a big wave came*; chaidh trì seachdainean seachad: *three weeks went past*; mus do lorg daoine na cuirp aca: *before people found their bodies*; 's e beatha dhoirbh a bh' aig na daoine: *it was a hard life the people had*.

ends