

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 138 (which corresponds to Litir 442). Ruairidh can be contacted at roddy.maclean@bbc.co.uk.

An t-seachdain sa chaidh, bha sinn ann an Èirinn. Bha sinn ann an Contae Mhaigh Eo. Bha mi ag innse dhuibh mu charragh-cuimhne. Tha an carragh-cuimhne faisg air an Dubh Loch. Tha grunn sgrìobhaidhean air ann am Beurla. Nam measg tha seo: "How can men feel themselves honoured by the humiliation of their fellow beings?": Mahatma Gandhi. Tha sgrìobhadh eile air a tha a' cuimhneachadh "the hungry poor who walked here in 1849". Cò bh' annta?

Anns a' Mhàrt ochd ceud deug, ceathrad 's a naoi (1849), bha muinntir taobh an iar na h-Èireann gu math bochd. Bha gaiseadh a' bhuntàta ann. Cha robh biadh gu leòr aig na daoine. Thachair rudeigin uabhasach faisg air an Dubh Loch.

Chaidh buidheann de dhaoine gu Taigh nam Bochd ann an Cluain Cearbán, no *Louisburgh*. Tha am baile sin gu tuath air an Dubh Loch. Dhiùlt an t-oifigear biadh a thoirt dhaibh. Cha d' fhuair iad biadh sam bith. 'S e dìreach am Bòrd – *The Board of Guardians* – a thug biadh seachad.

Bha dìthis aig a' Bhòrd a' coinneachadh beagan mhìltean air falbh. Bha e a' fàs dorch. Chuir na daoine an oidhche seachad a-muigh. Bha i fuar is fliuch. An ath mhadainn choisich iad don àite far an robh buill a' Bhùird.

Ràinig iad an t-àite aig meadhan-latha. Bha na buill – an Coirneal Hograve agus Mgr Lecky – a' gabhail biadh. Cha tàinig iad a-mach airson greis.

Nuair a thàinig iad a-mach bha droch naidheachd aca. Cha robh biadh aca airson nan daoine. Dh'fhalbh na daoine. Bha iad a' coiseachd air ais a Chluain Cearbán. Bha iad fuar is fliuch. Bha iad lag le acras. Air an oidhche sin chaochail mòran dhiubh – a-muigh air an dùthaich.

Chan eil duine cinnteach cia mheud duine a chaochail. 'S dòcha còrr is dà cheud. Bha e muldach.

Bidh feadhainn a' dol air chuairt gach bliadhna eadar an Dubh Loch is Cluain Cearbán. Bidh iad a' cuimhneachadh na thachair. O chionn sia bliadhna deug, chaidh an t-Àrd-easbaig Desmond Tutu à Afraga a Deas air a' chuairt. Chaidh an carragh-cuimhne a chur suas às dèidh sin.

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Faclan is abairtean: bha sinn ann an Èirinn: *we were in Ireland*; Contae Mhaigh Eo: *County Mayo*; tha an carragh-cuimhne faisg air an Dubh Loch: *the memorial*

is close to Doolough; cò bh' annta?: who were they?; gaiseadh a' bhuntàta: the potato blight; thachair rudeigin uabhasach: something terrible happened; gu Taigh nam Bochd ann an Cluain Cearbán: to the workhouse/poorhouse in Louisburgh; gu tuath air; to the north of; dhiùlt an t-oifigear biadh a thoirt dhaibh: the officer refused to give them food; a' coinneachadh beagan mhìltean air falbh: meeting a few miles away; chuir na daoine an oidhche seachad a-muigh: the people passed the night out of doors; an ath mhadainn choisich iad: next morning they walked; far an robh buill a' Bhùird: where the Board members were; cha tàinig iad a-mach airson greis: they didn't come out for a while; lag le acras: weak with hunger; air an oidhche sin chaochail mòran dhiubh: on that night many of them died; chan eil duine cinnteach cia mheud duine a chaochail: nobody is sure how many died; muldach: very sad; bidh feadhainn a' dol air chuairt gach bliadhna: some people go on a walk every year; a' cuimhneachadh na thachair: remembering what happened; chaidh an carragh-cuimhne a chur suas às dèidh sin: the memorial was erected after that.

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