

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 406 (which corresponds to Litir 710). Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.maclean@bbc.co.uk.

The vessel, the Admiral, sailed from the Western Isles in 1851. She was taking islanders to Quebec.

The landlord of Barra was Colonel John Gordon of Cluny. He wasn't too fussed about the people on his estate. It was said that the Colonel was miserly. But he was willing to spend money to make a profit. In 1838, he bought the old Clanranald estate in Uist. He bought Barra, and its surrounding islands, shortly after that. He had Barra for ten years before the Admiral sailed.

Gordon abolished crofts on the west side of Barra. He made them into farms. In 1846, the potato blight came. The government criticised Gordon. They said he didn't care about the island's people. They were suffering from hunger.

He defended himself. He was losing money, he said. He was assisting the people. And he had a 'solution'. He was going to clear the people. Between 1848 and 1850, hundreds were sent to Glasgow, Edinburgh and

Sheòl an soitheach, an Admiral, às na h-Eileanan an Iar ann an ochd ceud deug, caogad 's a h-aon (1851). Bha i a' toirt eileanaich gu ruige Quebec.

B' e uachdaran Bharraigh an Coirneal Iain Gòrdan Chluanaidh. Cha robh cus diù aige do na daoine air an oighreachd aige. Bhathar ag ràdh gun robh an Coirneal spiocach. Ach bha e deònach airgead a chosg airson prothaid a dhèanamh. Ann an ochd ceud deug, trithead 's a h-ochd (1838), cheannaich e seann oighreachd Chlann Raghnaill ann an Uibhist. Cheannaich e Barraigh, agus na h-eileanan timcheall air, goirid às dèidh sin. Bha Barraigh aige airson deich bliadhna mus do sheòl an Admiral.

Chuir Gòrdan às do chuid de chroitean air taobh an iar Bharraigh. Rinn e tuathanasan dhiubh. Ann an ochd ceud deug, ceathrad 's a sia (1846), thàinig gaiseadh a' bhuntàta. Rinn an riaghaltas càineadh air a' Ghòrdanach. Thuir iad gun robh e coma mu mhuinntir an eilein. Bha iad a' fulang le acras.

Dhìon e e fhèin. Bha e a' call airgid, thuir e. Bha e a' dèanamh cobhair air na daoine. Agus bha 'fhuasgladh' aige. Bha e a' dol a dh'fhuadachadh nan daoine. Eadar na bliadhnaichean ceathrad 's a h-ochd (1848) agus caogad (1850), chaidh na ceudan a chur a Ghlaschu, Dùn Èideann is Inbhir

Inverness.

The biggest clearance was in 1851. Colonel Gordon organised five vessels to take people to Quebec. His factor asked the named people from Barra to go to Lochboisdale in South Uist. Four hundred and fifty people were there. They were going to leave on the Admiral. The landlord fined everybody who didn't appear at the quay £2.

The factor wrote to the authorities in Quebec. He said that Gordon had paid the people's fares. He wrote that Gordon had given them clothes and shoes. And that he had bought them food and water for the voyage. But, as we'll see next week, things weren't quite that good.

Nis.

Bha am fuadach a bu mhotha ann sa bhliadhna caogad 's a h-aon (1851). Chuir an Coirneal Gòrdan còig soithichean air dòigh airson daoine a chur a Quebec. Dh'iarr a bhàillidh air an fheadhainn a chaidh ainmeachadh à Barraigh, a dhol a Loch Baghasdal ann an Uibhist a Deas. Bha ceithir cheud gu leth duine ann. Bha iad a' dol a dh'fhalbh air an *Admiral*. Chuir an t-uachdaran càin luach dà nota air gach duine nach do nochd aig a' chidhe.

Sgrìobh am bàillidh ris na h-ùghdarrasan ann an Quebec. Thuirt e gun robh an Gòrdanach air faraidhean nan daoine a phàigheadh. Sgrìobh e gun robh an Gòrdanach air aodach is brògan a thoirt dhaibh. Agus gun robh e air biadh is uisge a cheannach dhaibh airson na bhòidse. Ach, mar a chì sinn an-ath-sheachdain, cha robh cùisean buileach cho math sin.