

# 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 758 (which corresponds to Litir 1,062). Ruairidh can be contacted at [rodny.maclean@bbc.co.uk](mailto:rodny.maclean@bbc.co.uk).

<p><i>Before I leave the pages of the newspaper An Gàidheal (which I read on the internet), here is a bit of poetry from it for you. The poem is about the largest waterfall in North America – Niagara. Here's how it starts:</i></p> <p><i>Great Being that created the Elements, And settled the Universe, With your powerful, strong arm</i></p> <p><i>On [its] foundation; Glorious is the work you did Shaping famous Niagara, the great waterfall, In ancient times</i></p> <p><i>Have you yourself seen a great waterfall like Niagara? There are two amazing things about such [places]. The first thing is the mist that rises from it. It's like smoke. Also, how drizzling rain falls on you when you are close to the waterfall. Do you understand the word braon? Drizzle. A useful word in Scotland!</i></p> <p><i>When you would look from a distance, On the wonderful sight, You'd say it was a steam ship With its smoke rising; But, when you would come close to it Considering it.</i></p>	<p>Mus fhàg mi duilleagan a' phàipeir-naidheachd An Gàidheal (a leugh mi air an eadar-lìon), seo agaibh beagan bàrdachd bhuaithe. Tha an dàn mu dheidhinn an easa as motha ann an Ameireagaidh a Tuath – Niagara. Seo mar a tha e a' tòiseachadh:</p> <p><i>A Thì mhòir a chruthaich na Dùilean, 'S a shocraich an Cruinne, Led ghàirdean cumhachdach, neartmhor, Air a' bhunait; 'S glòrmhor an obair a rinn thu, Niagara ainmeil, An t-Eas mòr a rinn thu chumadh, Anns an t-seann aimsir</i></p> <p>Am faca sibh fhèin eas mòr mar Niagara? Tha dà rud iongantach mu a leithid. 'S e a' chiad rud an ceò a bhios ag èirigh às. Tha e coltach ri toit. Cuideachd, mar a thig braon ort nuair a tha thu faisg air an eas. A bheil sibh a' tuigsinn an fhacail braon? Drizzle. Facal feumail ann an Alba!</p> <p><i>Nuair a shealladh tu fad air astar,  Air an iongnadh, 'S e theireadh tu gur bàta-toite A bh' ann le smùidrich; Ach, nuair thigeadh tu am fagas dha Ghabhail do bheachd air,</i></p>
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*The white sparkling sheets of water would soak you with fine drizzle.*

*And there's another special thing about big waterfalls – that's the noise they make. You'll hear the roar of the waterfall at a great distance from the waters themselves. The bard writes this:*

*You can hear the rumble seven miles away;*

*Like thunder in the heavens,*

*Roaring powerfully.*

*And, when you'd stand next to it,*

*It would be like the clattering,*

*Of a thousand vehicles [heard] on a pavement,*

*Rushing past.*

*It's not only from North America or Scotland that the anecdotes and writings were coming [that appeared] on the pages of An Gàidheal. They had writers and readers in Australia also. In one edition, there is a letter from somebody called 'D.B' in MacArthur. That's near the Blue Mountains, west of Sydney.*

*The letter's writer told the readers that there were many Gaels in Australia. 'There's not a town worth naming in which there is not a Gaelic society established,' he wrote. And some of those Gaels were reading the international newspaper – An Gàidheal – that was in their own language.*

*Trom-fhliuchadh an cathadh caoir-  
gheal*

*Le braonaibh dealt thu.*

Agus tha rud sònraichte eile mu easan mòra – 's e sin am fuaim a tha iad a' dèanamh. Cluinnidh sibh beucaich an easa air astar mòr bho na h-uisgeachan fhèin. Tha am bàrd a' sgrìobhadh seo:

*Cluinnidh tu thorman seachd mìle*

*Uaith air astar;*

*Mar thàirn'each anns na speuraibh  
Ri beucaich neartmhor.*

*'S nuair bhiodh tu nad sheasamh  
làimh ris,*

*B' amhlaidh thartar,*

*'S mìle carbad air cabhsair,*

*Nan deann a' dol seachad.*

Chan ann a-mhàin às Aimeireagaidh a Tuath no Alba a bha na naidheachdan is sgrìobhaidhean air duilleagan a' Ghàidheil. Bha sgrìobhadairean is leughadairean aca ann an Astràilia cuideachd. Ann an aon iris, tha litir bho chuideigin air a bheil 'D.B.' ann am MacArtair. Tha sin faisg air na Beanntan Gorma, siar air Sydney.

Dh'inns sgrìobhadair na litreach don luchd-leughaidh gun robh tòrr Ghàidheal ann an Astràilia. 'Chan eil baile as fhiach ainmeachadh nach eil comunn Gàidhealach stèidhichte ann,' sgrìobh e. Agus bha cuid de na Gàidheil sin a' leughadh a' phàipeir-naidheachd eadar-nàiseanta– An Gàidheal – a bha anns a' chànan aca fhèin.