

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 970 (which corresponds to Litir 1,274). Ruairidh can be contacted at fios@learngaelic.scot.

I [have] already told you about the Gaelic bard and scholar, Dugald Buchanan. That was in Litir Bheag 350 to 354. Buchanan died at the age of 52 in 1768. He was heavily involved in the translation of the New Testament into Gaelic.

I am going to look at an account about Dugald today. I was telling you about a book about Rannoch in Perthshire. 'Schiehallion' was published in 1905. It was the minister in Kinloch Rannoch, the Rev. John Sinclair, that wrote it.

Although Dugald was born in Strathyre, near Balquhidder, he went to teach in Rannoch. Mr Sinclair praises him highly as a schoolmaster. He was in Rannoch for seventeen years. There were boys and girls in the school.

None of the pupils could speak English. Dugald was teaching English through the medium of Gaelic. He pointed out each object in the schoolroom. He made sure the children knew the Gaelic for them. Then he gave them the English for each thing.

Dh'inns mi dhuibh mu-thrath mun bhàrd agus sgoilear Gàidhlig, Dùghall Bochanan. Bha sin ann an Litrichean Beaga trì cheud is caogad (350) gu trì cheud, caogad 's a ceithir (354). Chaochail Bochanan aig aois caogad 's a dhà (52) ann an seachd ceud deug, seasgad 's a h-ochd (1768). Bha e an sàs gu mòr ann an eadar-theangachadh an Tiomnaidh Nuaidh gu Gàidhlig.

Tha mi a' dol a thoirt sùil air cunntas mu Dhùghall an-diugh. Bha mi ag innse dhuibh mu leabhar mu sgìre Raineach ann an Siorrachd Pheairt. Chaidh 'Schiehallion' fhoillseachadh ann an naoi ceud deug 's a còig (1905). B' e am ministear ann an Ceann Loch Raineach, an t-Urr. Iain Mac na Ceàrdaich, a sgrìobh e.

Ged a rugadh Dùghall anns an Iomaire Riabhach no Strathyre, faisg air Both Chuidir, chaidh e a theagasg ann an Raineach. Tha Mgr Mac na Ceàrdaich ga mholadh gu mòr mar mhaighstir-sgoile. Bha e ann an Raineach airson seachd bliadhna deug. Bha balaich agus clann-nighean anns an sgoil.

Cha robh Beurla aig gin de na sgoilearan. Bha Dùghall a' teagasg Beurla tro mheadhan na Gàidhlig. Chomharraich e gach rud anns an t-seòmar-sgoile. Rinn e cinnteach gun robh fios aig a' chloinn dè a' Ghàidhlig a bha orra. An uair sin thug e a' Bheurla dhaibh airson gach rud.

Dugald created small sentences in Gaelic. He asked the children to translate them into English. They weren't writing anything to begin with. Writing skills would come later.

All the instruction was bilingual. Everything the pupils did in Gaelic, they had to translate them into English. Everything that they were doing in English, they had to translate into Gaelic.

They were learning counting in both languages. There was no translation of the Bible at the time. Thus, they were reading the Bible in English and translating it into Gaelic.

Dugald was quite strict in the classroom. But he was playing with the children in the playground. The children liked him. I'll have more about him next week.

Chruthaich Dùghall seantansan beaga ann an Gàidhlig. Dh'iarr e air na sgoilearan an eadar-theangachadh gu Beurla. Cha robh iad a' sgrìobhadh càil an toiseach. Bhiodh sgilean sgrìobhaidh a' tighinn na b' fhaide air adhart.

Bha an t-oideachadh gu lèir dà-chànanach. Gach rud a rinn na sgoilearan ann an Gàidhlig, bha aca ri eadar-theangachadh gu Beurla. Gach rud a bha iad a' dèanamh ann am Beurla, bha aca ri eadar-theangachadh gu Gàidhlig.

Bha iad ag ionnsachadh cunntadh anns an dà chànan. Cha robh eadar-theangachadh dhen Bhìoball ann aig an àm. Mar sin, bha iad a' leughadh a' Bhìobaill ann am Beurla agus ga eadar-theangachadh gu Gàidhlig.

Bha Dùghall rudeigin cruaidh anns an t-seòmar-oideachaidh. Ach bha e a' cluich leis a' chloinn anns an raon-chluiche. Bha a' chlann measail air. Bidh tuilleadh agam mu dheidhinn an-ath-sheachdain.