

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 990 (which corresponds to Litir 1,294). Ruairidh can be contacted at fios@learngaelic.scot.

<p><i>I was telling you about M.E.M. Donaldson and her book 'Wanderings in the Western Highlands and Islands'. She has an account of how the MacIntyres got their name.</i></p> <p><i>It goes back to the time of Somerled the Great. He was a Gaelic-Norse leader. He was alive in the 12th century. He was wanting to marry the daughter of the King of Man. But her father, King Olaf, refused his permission. Somerled did not accept the refusal. And he obtained help from his foster-brother, Maurice MacNeill.</i></p> <p><i>Somerled and Olaf were sailing in their galleys. Maurice was on board Olaf's galley. He made holes in the hull. He filled the holes with butter to keep the seawater out. He made bungs to fill the holes when the butter would be gone.</i></p> <p><i>The King's vessel reached Ardnamurchan. It was stormy. The butter left the holes. Water started to leak in.</i></p> <p><i>Somerled was close by in his own galley. Olaf asked Somerled to help him. Somerled refused that until he got [would get] permission to</i></p>	<p>Bha mi ag innse dhuibh mu M.E.M. Donaldson agus an leabhar aice 'Wanderings in the Western Highlands and Islands'. Tha cunntas aice mu mar a fhuair na MacIntyres – Clann 'ic an t-Saoir – an ainm.</p> <p>Tha e a' dol air ais do linn Shomhairle Mhòir. B' esan ceannard Gàidhealach-Lochlannach. Bha e beò anns an dàrna linn deug. Bha e ag iarraidh nighean Rìgh Mhanainn a phòsadh. Ach dhiùlt a h-athair, Rìgh Amhlaibh, a chead. Cha do ghabh Somhairle ris an diùltadh. Agus fhuair e taic bho a bhràthair-dalta, Murchadh Mac Nèill.</p> <p>Bha Somhairle agus Amhlaibh a' seòladh anns na birlinnean aca. Bha Murchadh air bòrd birlinn Amhlaibh. Rinn e tuill anns an t-slige. Lìon e na tuill le ìm airson an sàl a chumail a-mach. Rinn e fàsagan airson na tuill a lìonadh nuair a dh'fhalbhadh an t-ìm.</p> <p>Ràinig soitheach an Rìgh Àird nam Murchan. Bha i stoirmeil. Dh'fhalbh an t-ìm às na tuill. Thòisich uisge air aoidion a-steach.</p> <p>Bha Somhairle faisg air làimh anns a' bhirlinn aige fhèin. Dh'iarr Amhlaibh air Somhairle cobhair a dhèanamh air. Dhiùlt Somhairle sin gus am faigheadh e cead</p>
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<p><i>marry Olaf's daughter. He got permission.</i></p> <p><i>Maurice put the bungs in the holes in the hull. That stopped the water getting in. Maurice was a joiner/carpenter. Because of that, he possessed a boring implement.</i></p> <p><i>People called his children 'the children of the carpenter'. We know them today in English as the 'MacIntyres'.</i></p> <p><i>Now, Mem Donaldson has a second story about how the MacIntyres started. The progenitor of the clan was by himself in a boat. A hole appeared in the hull.</i></p> <p><i>The man shoved a thumb in the hole. But he couldn't steer the boat. Thus, he cut his thumb off. Because he was a joiner/carpenter, he had some cutting device or other. He guided the boat to [the] harbour. Which story do you prefer?!</i></p> <p><i>Donaldson built a house in Ardnamurchan but it was destroyed by fire in the forties. She moved to Edinburgh where she died in 1958.</i></p>	<p>nighean Amhlaibh a phòsadh. Fhuair e cead.</p> <p>Chuir Murchadh na fàsagan anns na tuill anns an t-slige. Chuir sin stad air an uisge faighinn a-steach. Bha Murchadh na shaor. Air sàillibh sin, bha inneal-tollaidh aige.</p> <p>'S e Clann an t-Saoir a chanadh daoine ris a' chloinn aige. Tha sinn eòlach orra an-diugh ann am Beurla mar 'MacIntyres'.</p> <p>Nise, tha dàrna sgeul mu mar a thòisich na MacIntyres aig Mem Donaldson. Bha tùsaire a' chinnidh leis fhèin ann am bàta. Nochd toll anns an t-slige.</p> <p>Stob am fear òrdag san toll. Ach cha robh comas aige am bàta a stiùireadh. Mar sin, gheàrr e òrdag dheth. Leis gur e saor a bha ann, bha inneal gearraidh air choreigin aige. Stiùir e am bàta don chala. Dè an sgeul as fheàrr leibh fhèin?!</p> <p>Thog Donaldson taigh ann an Àird nam Murchan ach chaidh a sgrios le teine anns na ceathradan. Ghluais i a Dhùn Èideann far an do chaochail i ann an naoi ceud deug, caogad 's a h-ochd (1958).</p>
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