

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 994 (which corresponds to Litir 1,298). Ruairidh can be contacted at fios@learngaelic.scot.

I was telling you about the opening of the (Royal) Northern Infirmary Inverness. The history comes from the book 'The Hospitals of Inverness' by Jim and Steve Leslie.

The authors tell us that it was important that the staff spoke Gaelic. Among the nurses it was compulsory. Early in the 19th century, there were plenty of people in the Highlands who did not speak English. That was true even in Inverness itself.

It wasn't only the nurses who had to be fluent in Gaelic. There was a surgeon who was in charge ['above the others']. It was expected that he would also speak Gaelic. In the forties, a controversy arose when somebody was appointed to that post who did not speak Gaelic.

In 1845, a nurse was sacked for using bad language. But we are not told if she was speaking Gaelic or English!

There was no public health system. Wealthy people were sending the hospital money. An example [of them] was Lachlan

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh mu fhosgladh Taigh-eiridinn a' Chinn a Tuath ann an Inbhir Nis. Tha an eachdraidh a' tighinn bhon leabhar 'The Hospitals of Inverness' le Jim agus Steve Leslie.

Tha na h-ùghdaran ag innse dhuinn gun robh e cudromach gum biodh Gàidhlig aig an luchd-obrach. Am measg nan nursaichean, bha e riatanach. Tràth anns an naoidheamh linn deug, bha gu leòr de dhaoine air a' Ghàidhealtachd aig nach robh Beurla. Bha sin fìor eadhon ann an Inbhir Nis fhèin.

Chan e na nursaichean a-mhàin a dh'fheumadh a bhith fileanta ann an Gàidhlig. Bha lannsair ann a bha os cionn chàich. Bha dùil gum biodh Gàidhlig aigesan cuideachd. Anns na ceathradan, dh'èirich connspaid nuair a chaidh cuideigin a chur don dreuchd sin, agus e gun Ghàidhlig.

Ann an ochd ceud deug, ceathrad 's a còig (1845), fhuair banaltram a' bhròg a chionn 's gun robh i a' cleachdadh droch chainnt. Ach chan eilear ag innse dhuinn an robh i a' bruidhinn ann an Gàidhlig no Beurla!

Cha robh siostam slàinte poblach ann. Bha daoine beartach a' cur airgead don ospadal. B' e eisimpleir dhiubh Lachlan Mac an Tòisich às an Rathaig Mhòir. Chuir esan airgead dhachaigh à Beangal.

*Mackintosh of ['from']Raigmore.
He sent money home from Bengal.*

*Sometimes it was the ones who
were employing workers that were
paying for them. Among them were
the British Army and the company
that was building the Caledonian
Canal.*

*The churches were collecting
money for the infirmary on Sundays.
And there was a charity box in the
gategpost in front of the building. It is
still there, although people don't put
money in it!*

*Not so many people were going
to infirmaries as patients. They had
a reputation for people dying there.
But it's only a few patients that were
dying in the Northern Infirmary.
Thus, little by little, people were
more willing to go there as patients.*

*Jim and Steve Leslie did a good
job with a series of books about the
history of Highland hospitals. What
a change has come in our
infirmaries since that time.*

Uaireannan, 's iad an fheadhainn a
bha a' fastadh luchd-obrach a bha a'
pàigheadh air an son. Am measg sin, bha
Arm Bhreatainn agus a' chompanaidh a bha
a' togail a' Chanàil Chailleannaich.

Bha na h-eaglaisean a'
cruinneachadh airgead airson an taigh-
eiridinn air an t-Sàbaid. Agus bha bogsa-
cathrannais ann an ursainn a' gheata air
beulaibh an togalaich. Tha e ann fhathast,
ged nach bi daoine a' cur airgead ann!

Cha robh an t-uabhas dhaoine a' dol
gu taighean-eiridinn mar euslainteach. Bha
cliù aca gum biodh daoine a' bàsachadh
ann. Ach 's e glè bheag de dh'euslaintich a
bha a' faighinn bàs ann an Taigh-eiridinn a'
Chinn a Tuath. Le sin, mean air mhean, bha
daoine na bu deònaiche a dhol ann mar
euslaintich.

Rinn Jim agus Steve Leslie seoba
mhath le sreath leabhraichean air
eachdraidh ospadalan na Gàidhealtachd.
Abair an dà latha a thàinig air na taighean-
eiridinn againn bhon uair sin.