

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 187 (which corresponds to Litir 491). Ruairidh can be contacted at roddy.maclean@bbc.co.uk.

In September 2000, Robbie and Anne Northway moved into Strathan at Cape Wrath. It's a remote place. There was a bothy there. But it didn't have tap water. It didn't have electricity. There was no road. It was miles away from other settlements.

The house itself was kept in repair by the Mountain Bohies Association. That was as a place to stay for walkers. But the Northways went there with dogs and other animals. They did not have permission to be there. Why did they go to live in Strathan?

Well, the land was owned by the government. It was bought for crofting. Robbie Northway wanted to be a crofter. They lost their house in Badenoch. And they moved to Strathan.

The authorities didn't know what to do [what they were going to do]. The Northways received a demand to leave. But they received a demand from Highland Council for council tax! People came from the SSPCA (Scottish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals).

Ann an t-Sultain 2000, ghluais Robbie is Anne Northway don t-Srathan air a' Pharbh. 'S e àite iomallach a tha ann. Bha bothan anns an àite. Ach cha robh uisge an tap ann. Cha robh an dealain ann. Cha robh rathad ann. Bha e mìltean air falbh bho bhailtean eile.

Bha an taigh fhèin air a chumail an òrdugh le Comann Bothain nam Beann. Bha sin mar àite-fuirich do luchd-coiseachd. Ach chaidh na Northways ann le coin is beathaichean eile. Cha robh cead aca a bhith ann. Carson chaidh iad a dh'fhuireach anns an t-Srathan?

Uill, bha am fearann leis an riaghaltas. Bha e air a cheannach airson croitearachd. Bha Robbie Northway ag iarraidh a bhith na chroitear. Chaill iad an taigh aca ann am Bàideanach. Agus ghluais iad don t-Srathan.

Cha robh fios aig na h-ùghdarrasan dè bha iad a' dol a dhèanamh. Fhuair na Northways iarrtas airson falbh. Ach, fhuair iad iarrtas bho Chomhairle na Gàidhealtachd airson cìs-chomhairle! Thàinig feadhainn bhon SSPCA. Thug iad na naoi cuileanan air fad air falbh. Dh'fhàg iad

They took the nine puppies away. They left the family with one dog.

The winter came. It was very cold. The lochs were frozen. The matter went to court. The Northways lost. They had a month to leave.

Ann moved to Inverness. But Robbie remained at Strathan. The day of eviction came. But no sheriff's officer or policeman came. Time elapsed. It is foot and mouth disease that was responsible. People weren't going to a place where there was a danger that they would spread the disease. Robbie had two more months in the house.

In the end, [the] police and sheriff's officers came. That was three months after the day in [the] court. But, strangely, that was not the end of the story. I'll tell you what happened next week.

aon chù aig an teaghlach.

Thàinig an geamhradh. Bha i fuar fuar. Bha na lochan reòite. Chaidh a' chùis don chùirt. Chaill na Northways. Bha mìos aca airson falbh.

Ghluais Anne dh'Inbhir Nis. Ach dh'fhuirich Robbie anns an t-Srathan. Thàinig latha an fhuadachaidh. Ach cha tàinig oifigear siorraim no poileas sam bith. Chaidh ùine seachad. 'S e an galar roilleach a bu choireach. Cha robh daoine a' dol a dh'àite far an robh cunnart ann gun sgaoileadh iad an galar. Fhuair Robbie dà mhìos a bharrachd anns an taigh.

Mu dheireadh, thàinig na poilis agus maoir an t-siorraim. Bha sin trì mìosan an dèidh an latha anns a' chùirt. Ach, gu h-annasach, cha b' e sin deireadh na sgeòil. Innsidh mi dhuibh na thachair an ath-sheachdain.