

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 238 (which corresponds to Litir 542). Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.macleane@bbc.co.uk.

There is a place in Canna called Coroghon Castle. It's not a normal castle. In Gaelic it's called the Corra-dhùn. The steep fort or hill. Although it is not big, it is steep.

The building is next to the shore. It is very old. It is in a poor condition. If somebody does-n't do something soon, it won't be there long.

What use did people make of the fort? Some [people] say that people went there when they were in danger. But it is very small. And there is no water there.

There are signs close to the building. They warn people not to climb on the hill. It is dangerous. It's the national Trust for Scotland that put the signs there. And they put on them "Coroghon Castle-Prison". Do you reckon it was a prison, rather than a castle?

An interview was done with an old islander, the late Angus MacDonald. Angus was born in 1863. It's not "castle" he said but "prison".

According to oral tradition the building was used as a prison in olden times. But who was held

Tha àite ann an Canaigh air a bheil Coroghon Castle. Chan e caisteal àbhaisteach a tha ann. Ann an Gàidhlig 's e an Corra-dhùn a tha air. *The steep fort or hill.* Ged nach eil e mòr, tha e cas.

Tha an togalach an cois a' chladaich. Tha e gu math sean. Tha e ann an droch staid. Mura dèan cuideigin rudeigin a dh'aithghearr, cha bhi e ann fada.

Dè am feum a rinn daoine dhen dùn? Tha cuid ag ràdh gun deach daoine ann nuair a bha iad ann an cunnart. Ach tha e uabhasach beag. Agus chan eil uisge ann.

Tha sanasan faisg air an togalach. Tha iad a' toirt rabhadh do dhaoine gun a bhith a' streap air an dùn. Tha e cunnartach. 'S e Urras Nàiseanta na h-Alba a chuir na sanasan ann. Agus chuir iad orra "Coroghon Castle/Prison". Saoil an e prìosan a bha ann, seach caisteal?

Chaidh agallamh a dhèanamh le seann eileanach, Aonghas Dòmhnallach nach maireann. Rugadh Aonghas ann an ochd ceud deug, seasgad 's a trì (1863). Chan e "caisteal" a thuirt esan ach "prìosan".

A rèir beul-aithris bha an togalach air a chleachdadh mar phrìosan o shean.

there as a prisoner? Well, the wife of one of the clan chiefs. She was very beautiful. The clan chief was unhappy that she was attracted to another man.

Some [people] say that the clan chief was Dòmhnall Dubh na Cuthaig. Black-haired Donald of the Cuckoo. Dòmhnall Dubh na Cuthaig. How did he get a name like that?! Well, I'll tell you next week.

Dòmhnall Dubh was the chief of Clanranald. He died in Canna in 1686. Some [people] say that he locked his wife in Coroghon Prison.

If that is true, the building goes back to at least the Seventeenth Century. The first picture of it appeared in print in the Eighteenth Century. That was in the book that Thomas Pennant wrote. Pennant undertook a journey in Scotland in 1772. I hope the building will be saved. But it will be expensive.

Ach cò bha air a chumail ann mar phrìosanach? Uill, bha a' bhean aig fear de na cinn-chinnidh. Bha i uabhasach brèagha. Bha an ceann-cinnidh mì-thoilichte gun robh nòisean aice do dh'fhir eile.

Tha cuid ag ràdh gum b' e Dòmhnall Dubh na Cuthaig an ceann-cinnidh sin. *Black-haired Donald of the Cuckoo*. Dòmhnall Dubh na Cuthaig. Ciamar a fhuair e ainm mar sin?! Uill, innsidh mi dhuibh an ath-sheachdain.

Bha Dòmhnall Dubh na cheann-cinnidh aig Clann Raghnaill. Chaochail e ann an Canaigh ann an sia ceud deug, ochdad 's a sia (1686). Tha cuid ag ràdh gun do ghlais e a bhean ann am Prìosan a' Chorra-dhùin.

Ma tha sin fìor, tha an togalach a' dol air ais gu co-dhiù an seachdamh linn deug. Nochd a' chiad dhealbh dheth ann an clò anns an ochdamh linn deug. Bha sin anns an leabhar a sgrìobh Tòmas Pennant. Bha turas aig Pennant ann an Alba ann an seachd ceud deug, seachdad 's a dhà (1772). Tha mi an dòchas gum bi an togalach air a shàbhaladh. Ach bidh e cosgail.