

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 362 (which corresponds to Litir 666). Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.maclean@bbc.co.uk.

I was thinking about Thomas Garnett the other day. Garnett was in the Highlands at the end of the eighteenth century. He wrote a book about his journey – Observations on a Tour Through the Highlands and Part of the Western Isles of Scotland.

But why was I thinking about Thomas Garnett? Well, because he published accounts of the very thing I was talking about last week. That's seiches. Large movements of water in lochs.

There are accounts of seiches in Garnett's book. One account is about what happened in 1784. It was at Kenmore on Loch Tay. It was the minister at Kenmore that wrote the account. The water movement was very large. It left the bay dry. It was dry for a hundred yards out from the shore. Then the water returned, with force.

Here's a little about the life of Thomas Garnett. He was born in 1766. That was in Westmoreland in England. He obtained an opportunity to learn from a famous man. He was the physician and mathematician, John Dawson. Thomas was extremely conscientious. It appears he had absolutely no social life.

Bha mi a' smaoineachadh air Tòmas Garnett an latha eile. Bha Garnett air a' Ghàidhealtachd aig deireadh an ochdamh linn deug. Sgrìobh e leabhar mu dheidhinn a thurais – *Observations on a Tour Through the Highlands and Part of the Western Isles of Scotland.*

Ach carson a bha mi a' smaoineachadh air Tòmas Garnett? Uill, a chionn 's gun do dh'fhoillsich e cunntasan dhen dearbh rud air an robh mi a' bruidhinn an t-seachdain sa chaidh. 'S e sin seiches. Gluasadan mòra uisge ann an lochan.

Tha cunntasan de seiches anns an leabhar aig Garnett. Tha aon chunntas mu dheidhinn na thachair ann an seachd ceud deug, ochdad 's a ceithir (1784). Bha e aig a' Cheannmhor air bruach Loch Tatha. 'S e am ministear anns a' Cheannmhor a rinn an cunntas. Bha an gluasad-uisge uabhasach mòr. Dh'fhàg e am bàgh tioram. Bha e tioram ceud slat a-mach bhon chladach. An uair sin, thill an t-uisge, le neart.

Seo beagan mu bheatha Thòmais Gharnett. Rugadh e ann an seachd ceud deug, seasgad 's a sia (1766). Bha sin ann am Westmoreland ann an Sasainn. Fhuair e cothrom ionnsachadh bho fhear ainmeil. B' esan an lighiche agus fear-matamataig, John Dawson. Bha Tòmas gu math dìcheallach. Tha e coltach nach robh beatha shòisealta aige idir.

He graduated as a doctor in 1788. He worked as a physician. But he was also doing scientific research.

He married in 1795. He and his wife were going to move to America. One day, he was in Liverpool. He was making plans to emigrate to America. But, in Liverpool, he received an invitation to give lectures about natural philosophy. That changed his life. He didn't go overseas.

But he moved to Scotland. He obtained work as a professor in Anderson's Institute in Glasgow. When he was living in Glasgow, he made a plan, with the artist W H Watts, to take a journey to the Highlands. We'll look at that journey next week.

Cheumnaich e mar dhotair ann an seachd ceud deug, ochdad 's a h-ochd (1788). Dh'obraich e mar lighiche. Ach bha e cuideachd a' dèanamh rannsachadh saidheansail.

Phòs e ann an seachd ceud deug, naochad 's a còig (1795). Bha e fhèin 's a' bhean aige a' dol a ghluasad a dh'Ameireagaidh. Latha a bha seo, bha e ann an Liverpool. Bha e a' dèanamh phlanaichean airson a dhol a-null a dh'Ameireagaidh. Ach, ann an Liverpool, fhuair e cuireadh òraidean a dhèanamh air feallsanachd nàdarach. Dh'atharraich sin a bheatha. Cha deach e a-null thairis.

Ach ghluais e a dh'Alba. Fhuair e obair mar àrd-ollamh ann an Ionad MhicAnndrais ann an Glaschu. Nuair a bha e a' fuireach ann an Glaschu, rinn e plana, leis an neach-ealain W H Watts, cuairt a ghabhail air a' Ghàidhealtachd. Bheir sinn sùil air a' chuairt sin an-ath-sheachdain.