

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 409 (which corresponds to Litir 713). Ruairidh can be contacted at rodgy.maclean@bbc.co.uk.

I was telling you about the Annie Jane. She was making for Quebec in 1853. She was badly damaged in a storm. The skipper, Captain Mason, was beaching her in the Bàgh Siar in Vatersay.

The vessel went on the sand. But big waves broke over her. Many people were drowned.

The Annie Jane broke into three pieces. One piece went under. People were holding onto the shipwreck as well as they could. The shore was close but it wasn't close enough. And it was night-time. Help wasn't going to come until there was daylight.

The morning, on Sunday 29 September, was beautiful. The sea was calm and the wind was weak. Around seven o'clock, some of the people of Vatersay came to the beach. They saw the people in distress. They waded out to the ship.

One of the crew of the Annie Jane put a rope around his waist. He swam to the Vatersay folk. They tied the rope to the land. They took the people off with the rope.

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh mun t-soitheach an Annie Jane. Bha i a' dèanamh air Quebec anns a' bhliadhna ochd ceud deug, caogad 's a trì (1853). Bha i air a milleadh gu mòr ann an stoirm. Bha an sgiobair, an Caiptean Mason, ga cur air tìr anns a' Bhàgh Siar ann am Bhatarsaigh.

Chaidh an soitheach air a' ghainmhich. Ach chaidh tonnan mòra thairis oirre. Chaidh mòran daoine a bhàthadh.

Bhris an Annie Jane ann an trì pìosan. Chaidh aon pìos fodha. Bha daoine a' cumail grèim air an long-bhriseadh mar a b' urrainn dhaibh. Bha an cladach faisg ach cha robh e faisg gu leòr. Agus 's e an oidhche a bha ann. Cha robh cobhair a' dol a thighinn gus an robh solas an latha ann.

Bha a' mhadainn, air Didòmhnaich 29 Sultain, brèagha. Bha a' mhuir ciùin agus bha a' ghaoth lag. Mu sheachd uairean, thàinig cuid de mhuinntir Bhatarsaigh don tràigh. Chunnaic iad na daoine ann an èiginn. Ghrunnaich iad a-mach chun na luinge.

Chuir fear de chriudha an Annie Jane ròpa timcheall a mheadhain. Shnàmh e do na Bhatarsaich. Cheangail iad an ròpa ris an tìr. Thug iad na daoine dheth leis an ròpa.

<p><i>There were 101 people alive. There were more than 300 people dead. It was a terrible accident.</i></p> <p><i>There were 64 people living in Vatersay at that time. They were living in eight houses. Seven of the houses were thatched houses (blackhouses). The people were poor.</i></p> <p><i>Suddenly, there were more than a hundred more people among them. There wasn't enough food for everybody.</i></p> <p><i>Around 200 bodies were swept ashore by the tide. They were buried beside the beach in the Bàgh Siar. A memorial was erected around 1880. It's still there.</i></p> <p><i>The Bàgh Siar is beautiful and peaceful. But on a night 160 years ago, three hundred people died there.</i></p>	<p>Bha ceud 's a h-aon duine beò. Bha còrr is trì cheud duine marbh. 'S e tubaist uabhasach a bha ann.</p> <p>Bha seasgad 's a ceithir daoine a' fuireach ann am Bhatarsaigh aig an àm sin. Bha iad a' fuireach ann an ochd taighean. 'S e taighean-tughaidh a bha ann an seachd de na taighean. Bha na daoine bochd.</p> <p>Gu h-obann, bha còrr is ceud duine a bharrachd nam measg. Cha robh biadh gu leòr aca airson a h-uile duine.</p> <p>Chaidh mu dhà cheud corp a sguabadh gu tìr leis an tìde-mhara. Bha iad air an tiodhlacadh ri taobh na traghaid anns a' Bhàgh Siar. Chaidh carragh-cuimhne a chur suas timcheall air ochd ceud deug 's ochdad (1880). Tha e ann fhathast.</p> <p>Tha am Bàgh Siar brèagha agus sìtheil. Ach air oidhche o chionn ochd fichead bliadhna, fhuair trì cheud duine bàs ann.</p>
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