

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 706 (which corresponds to Litir 1,010). Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.maclean@bbc.co.uk.

I want to tell you about Dugald Carmichael from Lismore. Dugald was famous in the world of botanists. He is called the 'Father of Marine Botany'.

He was born at Stronacraoibh in the north of Lismore in 1772. His parents were poor crofters. From his youth, Dugald had a great interest in nature.

But it isn't science he did at university. He initially went to Glasgow University where he did Classics. Then he moved to the University of Edinburgh to study medicine. He came out as a surgeon.

He worked for nine years as a surgeon for the Argyll Fencibles. He was in Ireland all that time. However, he wasn't satisfied. He wanted to know more about nature. And he wanted to go overseas. So he joined as a soldier in another regiment – the 72nd Highlanders.

He was to initially at the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa. He delighted in the plants

Tha mi airson innse dhuibh mu Dhùghall MacIlleMhìcheil à Lios Mòr. Bha Dùghall ainmeil ann an saoghal nan lus-eòlaichean. Bithear a' gabhail 'Father of Marine Botany' air.

Rugadh e ann an Sròn na Craoibhe, ann an ceann a tuath Lios Mòr, anns a' bhliadhna seachd ceud deug, seachdad 's a dhà (1772). Bha a phàrantan nan croitearan bochda. Bho òige, bha ùidh mhòr aig Dùghall ann an nàdar.

Ach chan e saidheans a rinn e aig an oilthigh. Chaidh e an toiseach a dh'Oilthigh Ghlaschu far an do rinn e Eòlas Clasaigeach. An uair sin, ghluais e a dh'Oilthigh Dhùn Èideann airson Eòlas-leigheis a dhèanamh. Thàinig e amach mar lannsair.

Dh'obraich e airson naoi bliadhna mar lannsair aig na h-Argyll Fencibles. Bha e ann an Èirinn fad na h-ùine sin. Ge-tà, cha robh e riaraichte. Bha e airson tuilleadh eòlais a bhith aige air nàdar. Agus bha e airson a dhol a-null thairis. Mar sin, ghabh e cothrom mar shaighdear ann an rèisimeid eile – na 72nd Highlanders.

Bha e an toiseach ann an Ceap an Deagh Dhòchais ann an Afraga a Deas. Bha e air a bheò-ghlacadh leis na lusan an

there. In 1807 he went – voluntarily – to Algoa Bay, east of the Cape, near where Port Elizabeth is today. There he started to take an interest in the fish, in addition to plants.

Dugald wrote detailed notes about the trees and plants that were growing there, and the use to which locals put them. He defended the reputation of the sharks that abound in the sea there. In addition, he described of the way of life of the people.

In 1810, he was involved in an armed campaign by the British to take Mauritius from the French. At that time, it was L'Isle de France or the Isle of France that people called Mauritius. I'll tell you in the next Litir how Dugald Carmichael got on in that matter.

sin. Ann an ochd ceud deug 's a seachd (1807), chaidh e – gu saor-thoileach – gu Bàgh Algoa, gu sear air a' Cheap, faisg air far a bheil Port Ealasaid an-diugh. An sin, thòisich e air ùidh a ghabhail anns na h-èisg, a bharrachd air lusan.

Sgrìobh Dùghall notaichean mionaideach mu na craobhan is lusan a bha a' fàs ann, agus am feum a rinn muinntir an àite dhiubh. Dhion e cliù nan siorcan a tha pailt sa mhuir an sin. A bharrachd air sin, rinn e tuairisgeul de dhòigh-beatha nan daoine.

Ann an ochd ceud deug 's a deich (1810), bha e an sàs ann an iomairt armaichte aig na Breatannaich airson Mauritius a ghabhail thairis bho na Frangaich. Aig an àm sin, 's e L'Isle de France no Eilean na Frainge a chanadh daoine ri Mauritius. Innsidh mi dhuibh anns an ath Litir mar a chaidh do Dhùghall MacIlleMhìcheil anns a' ghnothach sin.