

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 720 (which corresponds to Litir 1,024). Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.macleon@bbc.co.uk.

I was telling you about the Scottish vehicle – the first one in Antarctica. This week I want to tell you about a Scottish man who was involved in Antarctic exploration. His name was William Speirs Bruce. His story is very interesting.

Bruce's father was a Scot. But William was born and raised in England. At the age of twenty, in 1887, he went to Scotland. He did educational courses in natural science. And he stayed in Scotland. He was highly interested in oceanography.

In 1892, he went to the Southern Ocean. He was in a fleet that left Dundee. They researched whaling. They didn't find enough whales. But Bruce really enjoyed the place.

He then went to Franz Josef Land in the Arctic, where he got to know the Norwegian polar explorer, Fridtjof Nansen. After that, he was back in Edinburgh. He declined the opportunity to go to the Antarctic along with Robert Scott. He had two reasons. He want to be in charge of a group himself. And he had no interest

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh mun charbad Albannach – a' chiad fhear anns an Antartaig. An t-seachdain seo tha mi airson innse dhuibh mu fhear Albannach a bha an sàs ann an rannsachadh na h-Antartaig. B' esan Uilleam Speirs Brus. Tha eachdraidh gu math inntinneach.

Bha athair Bhruis na Albannach. Ach rugadh is thogadh Uilleam ann an Sasainn. Aig aois fichead, ann an ochd ceud deug, ochdad 's a seachd (1887), chaidh e a dh'Alba. Rinn e cùrsaichean foghlaim ann an saidheans nàdarrach. Agus dh'fhuirich e ann an Alba. Bha ùidh mhòr aige ann an saidheans na mara.

Ann an ochd ceud deug, naochad 's a dhà (1892), chaidh e don Chuan a Deas. Bha e ann an cabhlach a dh'fhàg Dùn Dè. Rinn iad rannsachadh air sealg nam mucan-mara. Cha do lorg iad mucan-mara gu leòr. Ach chòrd an t-àite gu mòr ri Brus.

Chaidh e an uair sin gu Franz Josef Land anns an Artaig, far an d' fhuair e eòlas air an rannsaiche phòlach Nirribheach, Fridtjof Nansen. An dèidh sin, bha e air ais ann an Dùn Èideann. Leig e seachad cothrom a dhol don Antartaig cuide ri Raibeart Scott. Bha dà adhbhar aige. Bha e airson a bhith os cionn buidheann e fhèin. Agus cha robh ùidh sam bith aige ann a

in getting to the South Pole. He was focused on scientific research.

He married a woman, Jessie Mackenzie. It appears that the wedding was in Easter Ross. They went to live in Joppa, near Edinburgh.

The Royal Geographical Society refused Bruce financial aid for an Antarctic expedition. Thus, he raised money himself, in Scotland. Much of it came from the Coats brothers, who had a cotton industry.

They bought a Norwegian ship and did work on her. They gave her a new name – the Scotia. The whole thing was Scottish. The expedition's official name was The Scottish National Antarctic Expedition.

They left Troon in November 1902. I'll tell you how they got on next week.

bhith a' faighinn chun a' Phòla a Deas. 'S e rannsachadh saidheansail a bha fa-near dha.

Phòs e tè Seasaidh NicCoinnich. Tha e coltach gun robh a' bhanais ann an Ros an Ear. Chaidh iad a dh'fhuireach ann an Joppa, faisg air Dùn Èideann.

Dhiùlt Comann Rìoghail a' Chruinn-eòlais taic airgid do Bhrus airson triall Antartaigeach. Mar sin, thog e airgead dha fhèin, ann an Alba. Thàinig tòrr dheth bho na bràithrean Coats, aig an robh gnìomhachas cotain.

Cheannaich iad long Nirribheach agus rinn iad obair oirre. Chuir iad ainm ùr oirre – an Scotia. Bha an gnothach uile-gulèir Albannach. B' e ainm oifigeil an triall *The Scottish National Antarctic Expedition*.

Dh'fhàg iad An t-Sròn san t-Samhain, naoi ceud deug 's a dhà (1902). Innsidh mi dhuibh mar a chaidh dhaibh an-ath-sheachdain.