

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 848 (which corresponds to Litir 1,152). Ruairidh can be contacted at roddy.maclean@bbc.co.uk.

What is the Gaelic for propaganda? We use the international word – propaganda! It comes from the Latin propagare – which is connected to the English propagate. Propaganda means 'for that which is to be propagated'.

The word appeared in the seventeenth century in the Catholic Church. Around the end of the eighteenth century, it was used in connection with secular matters. Around the middle of the nineteenth century, it appeared in politics.

Why am I thinking about propaganda? It's because I was telling you about the Battle of Cromdale. As I explained, the Jacobites lost badly.

But that's not how it is in the song The Haughs of Cromdale. It was written a long time ago in Scots. Near the start of the song, there is this:

*I met a man in tartan trews,
Spiered at him whit wis the news, Quo' he,
'The Hieland army rues, That e'er we cam tae Cromdale.'*

In the second verse, the song mentions 'The English horse'. However, there were Scottish soldiers in the government force. The song also says that the clans stood up to the

Dè a' Ghàidhlig a tha air propaganda? Bidh sinn a' cleachdadh an fhacail eadar-nàiseanta – propaganda! Tha e a' tighinn bhon Laidinn propagare – a tha co-cheangailte ris a' Bheurla propagate. Tha propaganda a' ciallachadh 'for that which is to be propagated'.

Nochd am facal anns an t-seachdamh linn deug anns an Eaglais Chaitligich. Mu dheireadh an ochdamh linn deug, bha e air a chur gu feum ann an co-cheangal ri gnothaichean saoghalta. Mu mheadhan an naoidheamh linn deug, nochd e ann am poilitigs.

Carson a tha mi a' smaoinichadh air propaganda? Tha, a chionn 's gun robh mi ag innse dhuibh mu Chath Chromdhail. Mar a mhìnich mi, chaill na Seumasaich gu dubh ann.

Ach chan ann mar sin a tha e anns an òran The Haughs of Cromdale. Chaidh a sgrìobhadh o chionn fhada ann an Albais. Faisg air toiseach an òrain tha seo:

I met a man in tartan trews, Spiered at him whit wis the news, Quo' he, 'The Hieland army rues, That e'er we cam tae Cromdale.'

Anns an dàrna rann, tha an t-òran a-mach air 'The English horse'. Ge-tà, bha saighdearan Albannach ann am feachd an riaghaltais. Tha an t-òran cuideachd ag ràdh gun do sheas na fineachan ri armailt an

