

## **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 941 (which corresponds to Litir 1,245). Ruairidh can be contacted at [fios@learngaelic.scot](mailto:fios@learngaelic.scot).*

*We were looking at the Reverend William Shaw. He compiled a Gaelic dictionary in 1780. It includes Scottish and Irish words, mixed together.*

*He was encouraged by Dr Samuel Johnson. Shaw went to the Highlands in the spring of 1778.*

*He didn't seek public money for the project. He wanted to have well-to-do subscribers who would buy the book. What a list he had of subscribers – The Archbishop of Canterbury, the Duke of Argyll and so forth.*

*He went to many areas in the Highlands. There weren't many books or manuscripts there. It's from the voice itself that he got most of his words.*

*He got help from gentry but was disappointed by the ordinary people. They weren't willing to give him information without a reward. They reckoned he was getting a good income from the public purse to make the dictionary. But he wasn't.*

*He got great assistance from Sir James Foulis, baronet of Colinton. Foulis had learned Gaelic. He had*

Bha sinn a' toirt sùil air an Urramach Uilleam Seathach. Chuir e faclair Gàidhlig ri chèile ann an seachd ceud deug is ochdad (1780). Tha e a' gabhail a-steach fhaclan Albannach agus Èireannach, measgaichte còmhla.

Bha e air a bhrosnachadh leis an Oll. Somhairle MacIain. Dh'fhalbh Seathach don Ghàidhealtachd as t-earrach seachd ceud deug, seachdad 's a h-ochd (1778).

Cha do dh'iarr e airgead poblach airson a' phròiseict. Bha e airson 's gum biodh aontachairean cliùiteach a' ceannach an leabhair. Abair an liosta a bha aige de dh'aontachairean – Àrd-easbaig Chanterbury, Diùc Earra-Ghàidheal agus mar sin air adhart.

Chaidh e gu mòran sgìrean air a' Ghàidhealtachd. Cha robh mòran leabhraichean no làmh-sgrìobhainnean ann. 'S ann bhon ghuth fhèin a fhuair e a' chuid as motha de na faclan aige.

Fhuair e taic bho uaislean ach fhuair e briseadh-dùil am measg a' phobail. Cha robh iadsan deònach fiosrachadh a thoirt dha às aonais duais. Bha iad dhen bheachd gun robh e a' faighinn deagh thuarastal bhon sporan phoblach airson am faclair a dhèanamh. Ach cha robh.

Fhuair e taic mhòr bhon Ridire Seumas Foulis, frith-bharan Cholinton. Bha

<p><i>done a lot of research on the language.</i></p> <p><i>Shaw then went to Ireland. He got hold of many manuscripts there. He returned to London in February 1779. He travelled three thousand miles on his journey. He collected nearly three thousand words.</i></p> <p><i>The dictionary is in two parts. In the first part, Gaelic words appear as headwords. In the second book, English is there as headwords.</i></p> <p><i>In January 1786, Shaw took some people to the Court of Session in Edinburgh. They had refused to give him the money they [had] promised him for the dictionary. They were maintaining that he didn't fulfil what he himself had promised.</i></p> <p><i>But Mr Shaw was successful in court. You can make up your own mind on his work. The dictionary can be read on the internet.</i></p>	<p>Foulis air Gàidhlig ionnsachadh. Bha e air tòrr rannsachaidh a dhèanamh air a' chànan.</p> <p>Chaidh Seathach an uair sin a dh'Èirinn. Fhuair e grèim air tòrr làmh-sgrìobhainnean an sin. Thill e a Lunnainn anns a' Ghearran seachd ceud deug, seachdad 's a naoi (1779). Shiubhail e trì mìle mìle air an turas aige. Chruinnich e faisg air trì mìle facal.</p> <p>Tha am faclair ann an dà phàirt. Anns a' chiad phàirt, tha faclan Gàidhlig ann mar cheann-fhaclan. Anns an dàrna leabhar, tha a' Bheurla ann mar cheann-fhaclan.</p> <p>Anns an Fhaoilleach seachd ceud deug, ochdad 's a sia (1786) thug Seathach feadhainn gu Cùirt an t-Seisein ann an Dùn Èideann. Bha iad air diùltadh an t-airgead a gheall iad airson an fhaclair a thoirt dha. Bha iad a' cumail a-mach nach do choilean e na gheall e fhèin.</p> <p>Ach chaidh a' chùis le Mgr Seathach. Faodaidh sibh ur beachd fhèin a ghabhail air an obair aige. Gabhaidh am faclair a leughadh air an eadar-lìon.</p>
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